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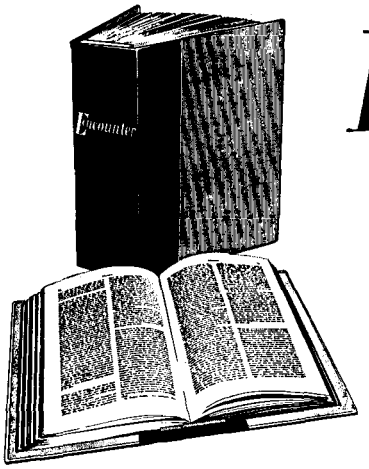

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Ferdinand Mount

The Literary Spirit in Politics

On the Hazards of Being an Intellectual

LA COMMEDIA *è finita.* With the words usually given to the clown in *Pagliacci,* Harold Macmillan took his leave of the political stage in 1963. Vicky, the sharpest cartoonist of the age, had portrayed Macmillan not as a clown but rather as the ageing variety artist, *The Entertainer* of John Osborne's play. Yet both artist and subject agreed in seeing this man who had a longer spell in power than any British Prime Minister for 40 years as a showman, deft, resilient and patter-perfect.

During the Presidency of John Kennedy, the musical *Camelot* was all the rage. It is not surprising that a parallel should have been drawn between King Arthur and his court and the Washington of this young war hero and his lovely wife. But one might have expected this parallel to be confined to women's magazines and the more feather-headed supporters of the régime. Not at all. The metaphor was widely used by serious columnists. And those inside the White House itself, not excluding the Kennedys, lost no opportunity to illuminate and embellish the picture; the visits of famous savants, Nobel Prize-winners and their ilk, the musical soirées, even the redecoration of the White House in exquisite taste, all combined into an image of

> *. . . the island-valley of Avilion;*
> *Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,*
> *Nor ever wind blows loudly.*

So patent and so costly were the efforts required to weave this glowing tapestry that even those who were enthralled by the effect could not pretend ignorance of the techniques employed to weave it by the nimble fingers of Madison Avenue.

Or again picture the newsmen squeezed on to little gilt chairs in the frosty elegance of the Elysée Palace. In the deep midwinter, once a year, the General speaks. The very rarity of the performance deepens the hush. Note how carefully the questions are planted and how carefully the General answers them. His syntax is a little richer and his phrasing a little cloudier than in his appeals to the nation on television: for this is a *tour d'horizon.* Its grandeur must not be impaired by any bathetic detail. For years this performance is repeated; the words follow the same pattern, but the newsman's ear strives to catch the fresh nuances, the differences in tone and emphasis, like a playgoer who never misses a new Hamlet. And when this Hamlet finally departs, what hastens his departure but another drama?

A performance of a different sort, this one; Raymond Aron calls it a psychodrama.[1] It may not have been "*les événements de Mai-Juin 1968*" which finally finished de Gaulle, but it was these events which made his style begin to seem faded and no longer relevant or responsive to the age. Even those who considered the goings-on in the courtyards of the Sorbonne self-indulgent, childish, and ultimately destructive could not deny their theatrical impact. How irresistible the promise of endless free-flowing dialogue—witty, sincere, and warm! How dazzling the contrast between the stuffy lecture-rooms and the fresh faces who had captured them! How crass and brutish the riot police! Above all, how overwhelming to see those theories of liberty *acted out* on a small, enclosed and theatrically perfect stage instead of being obscured by academic jargon on the printed page!

Aron says: "I do not use the term *psychodrama* without modification. But nevertheless,

[1] Raymond Aron, "Reflections After the Psychodrama", (ENCOUNTER, December 1968).

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we have all been acting a part during this period. I took on the role of de Tocqueville; this has its ridiculous side, but others were playing Saint-Just, Robespierre or Lenin, which all in all was even more ridiculous. . . ." Tocqueville himself writes of the 1848 Revolution in his *Recollections*:

> . . . the whole time I had the feeling that we had staged a play about the French Revolution, rather than that we were continuing it. . . . Though I foresaw the terrible end to the piece well enough, I could not take the actors very seriously; the whole thing seemed a vile tragedy played by a provincial troupe.

Melodramatic political events suggest analogies with the theatre; equally, the theatre suggests political lines of attack. Robert Brustein, dean of the Yale Drama School, gives a good account of how the Living Theatre group "spontaneously" employed storm-trooper tactics to break up a meeting organised to discuss their own aims.[2] To glory in such a conscious fusing of politics and the theatre is increasingly common. "The play's the thing", says Abbie Hoffman, the leader of the "Yippies." When Roel van Duyn, the inventor of the Dutch Gnomes/Pixies, was elected to the Amsterdam City Council, he treated council procedure as pure theatre:

> After all it *was* a theatre. Everyone had a fixed role; all decisions were taken in advance; there was no real debate; and nobody listened to anybody else. So I decided to do consciously what the others did unconsciously. I acted a part—my own role. (Profile, *The Observer*, 16 May 1971.)

The radicals believe that their staged confrontations with authority are the only authentic gestures possible in face of a universally repressive society, that theatrical daring is the only way to break up the conventional moulds of political structures and attitudes. The Tocquevilles and Brusteins say that this is all mere play-acting. For them the radicals appear to be children taking refuge in fantasy from a world with which they are too weak to cope.

YET IN ONE SENSE both sides miss the point. For political theatre can be used to impose or strengthen a conventional structure as well as to smash one. Professor Lucien Pye remarks of Mao's China:

> In no other political culture has use of the theatre been so widespread and intensive. Strip away the dance teams, the theatrical groups, the mass parades and the gymnastic formations, and one of the most distinctive features of the Chinese brand of Communism would disappear.

Nor is the use of such methods confined to one part of the political spectrum. In the 17th century Lord Halifax observed:

> Monarchy is liked by the people, for the Bells and the Tinsel, the outward Pomp and Gilding, and there must be milk for babes, since the greatest part of Mankind are, and ever will be, included in that List. . . .

Bagehot, in the first chapter of his *English Constitution,* refers specifically to the theatrical element:

> It is very natural, therefore, that the most useful parts of the structure of government should by no means be those which excite the most easy reverence. The elements which excite the most easy reverence will be the *theatrical* elements—those which appeal to the senses, which claim to be embodiments of the greatest human ideas, which boast in some cases of far more than human origin. That which is mystic in its claims; that which is occult in its mode of action; that which is brilliant to the eye; that which is seen vividly for a moment, and then is seen no more; that which is hidden and unhidden; that which is specious, and yet interesting, palpable in its seeming, and yet professing to be more than palpable in its results; this—howsoever its form may change, or however we may define it or describe it, is the sort of thing—the only sort which yet comes home to the mass of men.

Bagehot goes on to say that the lowest orders are "likely to care least and judge worst about what *is* useful."

Such frankness, like that of Halifax, is out of style among today's radicals. Yet their kind of theatre rests upon exactly the same supposition, namely, that the masses are too foolish and dim to be swayed by rational argument. Only the glittering hyperbole of the theatre is capable of stirring their sluggish interest. The gap between Brecht's political theatre and the Maoist's theatrical politics is narrow indeed; the tone of didactic condescension is identical.

THE IRONY is, however, that at present in the Western world the masses remain largely indifferent to the radical's form of political theatre. They can be observed turning their backs on the intellectual horde which is panting to restructure their consciousness and they carry on with their rational arguments about such pedestrian topics as the cost of living. The intellectuals, on the

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[2] Robert Brustein, "A Night at the Symposium", in *Revolution as Theatre* (New York, 1971).

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other hand, are stage-struck. I refer not solely to the Gnomes, the Yippies, and the New Left but also to men of mature years like Malraux, Galbraith, Schlesinger, who respond not only to the intoxicating opportunities of power but also to the romantic image of their leader—an image which, it may be noted, is usually dismissed with good-humoured scepticism by the broad mass even of the leader's own supporters.

And the further we move away from the established seats of authority towards the political theatre of the streets, the greater the proportion of intellectuals we shall find among both actors and audience.

Men of letters, as Burke says, being fond of distinguishing themselves, are rarely averse to innovation. Persons of intelligence and sensitivity whose interest is drawn to politics expect a stimulus at least as sharp as that to be experienced through the performing arts, and as much colour and warmth as there is to be found in the conversation of friends. They are frequently disappointed, not of course by the dazzling possibilities of Marx and Rousseau, but in the countervailing political theory and practice of, let us choose at random, Mill, Tocqueville, Aron, Attlee, Peel, Baldwin. This, they will murmur, is humdrum stuff.

And certainly some political scientists are not unaware of the murmuring. Tocqueville, for example, writes (again in his *Recollections*):

> What I call the literary spirit in politics consists in looking for what is ingenious and new rather than for what is true, being fonder of what makes an interesting picture than what serves a purpose, being very appreciative of good acting and fine speaking without reference to the play's results, and, finally, judging by impressions rather than reasons.

Aron remarks that his has been described as "a melancholy approach." In fact Aron shows a cautious confidence in the possibilities of the future. He remarks acidly "in so far as Sartre-like political literature is considered normal, the attempt to think with lucidity and detachment which has always been the ambition of philosophers, must appear mysterious." True, but is this all?

The more closely the political scientist concerns himself with the humdrum practicalities of politics, the more he will share the odium of the practising politician. What is the nature of this odium? Why are politicians so unpopular? Raleigh summarises the usual accusation:

> *Tell men of high condition*
> *That manage the Estate,*
> *Their purpose is ambition,*
> *Their practice only hate:*
> *And if they once reply,*
> *Then give them all the lie.*

Such a view is not confined to what one might call literary adventurers. Adam Smith writes of "that insidious and crafty animal, vulgarly called a statesman or politician, whose councils are directed by the momentary fluctuations of affairs." And, as F. S. Oliver points out,[3] Adam Smith "enjoyed the confidence of Mr Pitt and the friendship of Mr Burke"; he was not one to shrink from the insensitive crudities of political conversation.

This feeling of revulsion goes beyond a healthy distrust of any politician's motives; it even goes beyond that distaste so many of us feel for the spectacle of someone "on the make", a spectacle which is of course heightened by the spotlights of the political theatre. There is something more even than this. I mean a distaste for the *manner* of practising politicians both in public and private conversation. This distaste is to be observed even among those (political commentators, for example) whose life is lived in the political world and with politicians. Members of Parliament, Senators, Congressmen, Deputies are not an attractive breed. We shun the company even of those whose opinions we share. Why should this be so?

To gain some insight into this problem which is a perpetual threat to the harmonious functioning of society, let us go back to the roots of the theatrical metaphor which has called our attention to the existence of the problem.

IN MOLIERE'S *Le Misanthrope*, the choleric Alceste, impatient for certainty and sincerity, does not understand the value of his friend Philinte, an intelligent, placid, kindly man of the world; Philinte appreciates Alceste's absolute moral qualities and is also fond of him. Here only does he touch Alceste who responds to Philinte's uncalculated affection for him. Yet he complains unceasingly to Philinte of the hypocrisy of the people he meets:

[3] *Politics and Politicians* (London, 1934), p. 76.

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I'd have them be sincere, and never part
With any word that isn't from the heart.[4]

Philinte responds:

But in polite society, custom decrees
That we show certain outward courtesies. . . .

ALCESTE:

Ah, no! we should condemn with all our force
Such false and artificial intercourse.
Let men behave like men; let them display
Their inmost hearts in every thing they say.
(11.65-70)

It is not as if Philinte was innocent of the world. His view of the world corresponds closely to Alceste's. Only he draws a stoic rather than a radical conclusion from that view:

ALCESTE:

Do you propose to offer lame excuses
For men's behaviour and the times' abuses?

PHILINTE:

No, all you say I'll readily concede:
This is a low, conniving age indeed;
Nothing but trickery prospers nowadays,
And people ought to mend their shabby ways.
Yes, man's a beastly creature; but must we then
Abandon the society of men?
Here in the world, each human frailty
Provides occasion for philosophy,
And that is virtue's noblest exercise;
If honesty shone forth from all men's eyes
If every heart were frank and kind and just,
What could our virtues do but gather dust
(Since their employment is to help us bear
The villainies of men without despair)?
A heart well-armed with virtue can endure. . . .
(11.1553-1568)

It should be noticed that, although this attitude in itself could be described (and has been by such authorities as Faguet and Rudler) as misanthropic, it has a softer side which amounts to an affection for his fellow beings with all their faults:

PHILINTE:

Come, let's forget the follies of the times
And pardon mankind for its petty crimes;
Let's have an end of rantings and of railings,
And show some leniency toward human failings.
This world requires a pliant rectitude;
Too stern a virtue makes one stiff and rude;
Good sense views all extremes with detestation,
And bids us to be noble in moderation.
The rigid virtues of the ancient days
Are not for us; they jar with all our ways
And ask of us too lofty a perfection.
Wise men accept their times without objection,
And there's no greater folly, if you ask me,
Than trying to reform society.
Like you, I see each day a hundred and one
Unhandsome deeds that might be better done,
But still, for all the faults that meet my view,
I'm never known to storm and rave like you.
I take men as they are, or let them be,
And teach my soul to bear their frailty;
And whether in court or town, whatever the scene,
My phlegm's as philosophic as your spleen.
(11.145-166)

Not only in these lines but in his conduct Philinte shows a patient humanity and tolerance.

As a result of a reluctance to compromise, Alceste becomes caught up in a lawsuit and a row with a prickly poet; for the same reason his affair with the dashing young widow, Célimène, is doomed from the outset. Throughout all these troubles, Philinte sticks to his side, offering him good advice, getting him out of a tricky situation with the *Tribunal des Maréchaux* (11.1133-1162), even refusing to press his suit with Eliante, whom he loves, until he is certain that Alceste, whom *she* loves, does not want her.

Molière thus makes it perfectly clear that Philinte is not a treacherous worldly time-server. His devotion to Alceste is remarkable. Yet we would not cross the street to meet Philinte; he is, as Molière intended, a banal figure, polished until everything of interest has been rubbed away.

Alceste, on the other hand, is a perpetually fascinating character, endlessly the topic of conversation (his own and other people's), blind to the desires and characters of other people (why otherwise would he have taken up with Célimène?), obsessed with self. He believes that his lawsuit will be remembered by posterity; he would even rather lose it, because that would give him the right to curse the wickedness of men. A great comic figure.

And yet through the ages, a large number of people have been unable to accept *Le Misanthrope* as Molière wrote it. They could not accept that a banal realist should be in a sense the hero and a noble idealist the clown. Many if not most of the Romantics rebelled against the text in this way; Alceste has from time to time been played as an almost completely serious hero. Musset called him "a herald of the better truth." Michelet saw him as "the hangman of hypocrites" and hence a forerunner of the French Revolution. The greatest of all these rebels against Molière was Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

[4] 11.35-36. Translated Richard Wilbur (London, 1958).

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THE BURDEN OF ROUSSEAU'S ATTACK on the play is that Molière has falsified and vulgarised reality to get cheap laughs. "He had to make the audience laugh." Rousseau complains that Alceste is not a true misanthrope, who would indeed be a monster, but a man of bitter sincerity who hates in men only the evil which they do. It is unfair to mock such a man by grafting on to him irrelevant characteristics—personal vanity, anger over trifles, possessiveness in love. Now it is of course evident that such characteristics are far from irrelevant; they are typical of the man who insists on absolutes. And whatever Rousseau may say, they are comic weaknesses. The most glaring proof that this is so lies in the character of Rousseau himself, suspicious, prickly, extreme —Alceste to the life in all his strength and failings. It is Molière's glory that, a century before the advent of the "natural man", he should have analysed him so completely and sharply in Alceste. Rousseau quite fails to understand the subtlety of the characterisation which consists precisely in the fact that Alceste is not a comic symbol of misanthropy in the same way that Tartuffe is a comic symbol of hypocrisy, but a mixture of the sublime and the ridiculous. If it was a question of making the audience laugh, Molière knew far coarser, more surefire tricks of the dramatist's trade than he ever uses in *Le Misanthrope*.

But we are perhaps even more concerned here with Rousseau's portrait of Philinte:

> One of these worldly gentlemen whose maxims are very like those of scoundrels; one of those mild and moderate people who always think that everything is going well because it is in their interest that nothing should go better; who always get on with everybody because they don't care about anybody; who, with their knees under a good table, assert that it is untrue that the masses are hungry; who, with their purse well lined, take it amiss that people should speak up on behalf of the poor; who, from the security of their homes, would be quite happy to see the whole human race burgled, pillaged, fleeced and butchered, seeing that God has endowed them with a splendid capacity meekly to endure the misfortunes of others. (Works, Paris, 1821, Vol. XI, *Lettre à M. d'Alembert*, p. 50, my translation.)

In spite of all Molière's precautions, Rousseau has refused to see the Philinte of the text. For time and again, as we have seen, Molière emphasises that Philinte's stoicism is not just talk; its practical effect is loyalty, kindness, and self-renunciation. The extent of Rousseau's blindness is shown by his description as "the maxims of scoundrels" remarks by Philinte which are clearly affectionately ironic (what Faguet aptly describes as *"taquin"* or "teasing").[5]

LET US BE CLEAR about the lesson of the piece. In the Mary-Martha sense, Alceste *is* the hero and Philinte the straight man, the down-to-earth stooge. But Molière's point (one repeated again and again throughout his work, a strong moral centre which makes him the last if not the only real master of the high comedy) is that spiritual attitudes are incomplete without practical application; that we must look always to the *effects* of action and beliefs. The case here is plain. Alceste, a noble and attractive soul, leaves nothing but mess and misery in his wake; Philinte, a banal and *tarnished* soul, tidies up the loose ends with a disenchanted charity. Molière leaves us with a dilemma which we may roughly express thus: is tarnishing the price of being human? Can we love our fellow men without getting our hands dirty? It is Alceste's self-absorption that destroys his tolerance, which makes him a genuine misanthrope—which of course the simple audience never doubted. It is in that sense that Burke rightly says that the theatre is a good school of moral sentiments.[6] Whatever the intention of the producer, the audience cannot help, to a greater or lesser extent, sharing in Molière's vision of the comic misanthrope.

The rebels against the text cannot accept this. For there follows from the play one crucial *practical* consequence; that we shall always love Alceste the more, but that we had far better be governed, both in our private lives and in our political arrangements, by Philinte. The unmitigated pursuit of sincerity has a disastrous effect upon our lives; it is far better to recognise the fallen nature of man and to organise some rough-and-ready, temporary, alterable cage-structure to keep us from each other's throats while allowing us as much liberty as possible. But the rebels rattle the bars of such cages with a rising rage. They invent choleric dreams. Rousseau, for example, tells us how the characteristics ought to be distributed in the *Misanthrope*:

[5] Emile Faguet, *Rousseau contre Molière* (Paris, 1912).

[6] *Works* (London, 1808), Vol. V, p. 158.

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> I mean that the misanthrope ought to have been always outraged by public vice and always quite calm about the iniquities, of which he personally was the victim. By contrast Philinte the philosopher ought to look upon all social disorders with a stoical phlegm and fly into a rage over the slightest ill which directly affected him personally.

Well, yes, characters like Rousseau's Alceste and Rousseau's Philinte do exist; but they are rarer, less psychologically true than Molière's versions. Rousseau's protagonists are particularly uncommon in public life; a certain unity of temperament produces either Molière-Alcestes or Molière-Philintes. And it is incontestable that Molière-Philintes (Sir Robert Walpole, for example) produce far more congenial circumstances than Molière-Alcestes (Torquemada or Lenin). It is for this very reason that Rousseau felt driven to sketch out precisely how the play *should* have been written.

A further fascination is that a later hand did in fact write a new play—with the same characters. Fabre d'Eglantine, travelling actor, playwright, rascal who tagged on to the French Revolution and went to the guillotine with the Dantonists, wrote "*Le Philinte de Molière ou La Suite du Misanthrope,*" successfully performed at the Comédie Française in 1790. In fact Fabre's piece was not primarily inspired by Rousseau's suggestion but by another play of the time which reflected an absurd Panglossian optimism. The interest in Fabre's piece is that he has had to carry Rousseau's suggestion a great deal further. For the drawback of Rousseau-Alceste was that, although deprived of personal pettiness, he would still be of little practical assistance to his friends or to the public. Certainly, "the audience would then only have been able to laugh at the expense of the man of the world," as Rousseau wanted; but they would be hardly likely to entrust their affairs to Alceste, as Rousseau, perhaps only half-consciously, also wanted. Fabre brings this out into the open. Philinte becomes a selfish, whining middle-aged man. He is saved from arrest and bankruptcy by the disinterested services of Alceste. Philinte is here certainly a transformed character, but there is an even greater surprise when we come to look at Fabre's Alceste. Here we have, as Fabre-Philinte tells us, a real "Don Quixote" who entirely neglects his own affairs in order to help others. The difference between Fabre-Alceste and Quixote is that the former's help is of great practical benefit. In fact the new Alceste is hardly a misanthrope at all. He does, it is true, reject the grateful friendship of Philinte at the end. Henceforth

> I relegate you to that class of cold beings who have lost all right to be called by the noble name of men, who have been dead, stone dead, for years before the actual moment of death, and whom one pities for the sake of one's own honour.

Fabre-Alceste is the wave of the future. He cannot afford to mix with the dried-up old "scoundrels". He is purged of all vanity, of all interests save the cause of humanity. So no doubt Fabre saw himself, just as Rousseau saw himself as Rousseau-Alceste and as Molière did *not* see himself either as his Alceste or even his Philinte.

Yet in truth Fabre d'Eglantine's one good quality was his theatrical talent. For the rest, his character shows a cold and scheming selfishness redeemed only by comic mishaps; Molière's Alceste without the purity of soul. Then suddenly at the end of his life, Fabre's dreams come true. He tastes a little power and acclamation, he is surrounded by self-romanticising adventurers like himself (one of them, Collot d'Herbois, was even a strolling actor whom he had met in his travelling days), he *belongs*. In that crowd of actors and journalists hanging around the Cordeliers we are then to see the wave of the future.

Why not? Why should not honest, passionately sincere hearts and minds bring a fresh honesty and sincerity to government? Because government is by nature a banal skill, but a skill. Danton, Fabre d'Eglantine, Collot d'Herbois, and the rest did not perish on the guillotine because they were fiddling the petty cash. The Dantonists were amateurs in a game in which the real professionals like Talleyrand had withdrawn to the sidelines. Any professional jockey will testify that his most terrifying experience has been when he has strayed into a bunch of amateur riders. To talk about their enthusiasm and freshness at such a moment would be ludicrous; they are simply highly dangerous both to themselves, to each other and to the onlooker.

It is certain that unremitting attention to a limited professional skill breeds a limited mind; but it breeds also a steady and undistracted mind, with an eye for the hidden snag,

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the crucial detail. As Burke says, "I have never yet seen any plan which has not been mended by the observations of those who were much inferior in understanding to the person who took the lead in the business."

To some the work may seem dull stuff. The sharpest mind is dulled by the constant flow of similar but not identical dealings, the lack of plan or pattern, the only progress a slow accretion of professional wisdom. Such a business will not attract for long those with large imaginations and ample passions.

ACCORDING TO Samuel Beckett, "the fundamental duty of habit . . . consists in a perpetual adjustment and readjustment of our organic sensibility to the conditions of its worlds."[7] Such is the daily duty of the politician. By contrast, for all that the creation of great works of art requires the same attention and perseverance as the solution of a political problem, the artist cannot accept what is in essence an *assimilation* of experience. He cannot tolerate that the novelty should be turned into a habit, that an experience which was so fresh, which gave him the feeling of being so much *alive* should be dulled by what Beckett calls the "narcosis" of habit. Therefore he cannot accept politics; for the call for revolution is at heart nothing less than a rejection of politics. Politics is a practical mode of experience; its task is to reconcile habits, not to intensify and explore sensation. The politician has to make friends not only of occasions but of individuals and groups to whom his heart may be hostile or indifferent. But, in Beckett's words,

> For the artist, who does not deal in surfaces, the rejection of friendship is not only reasonable but a necessity. Because the only possible spiritual development is in the sense of depth. The artistic tendency is not expansive but a contraction. And art is the apotheosis of solitude.

Such an intense vision of the artist's life may seem far removed from the gimcrack romance which so appeals to the intellectual in politics, and further still from the half-baked longing for action of the young men in Flaubert's *Sentimental Education* or of those whom Mr Philip Larkin calls "Colonel Sloman's Essex Rifles." Yet the contagion is as deadly to professors and Grand Old Men as it is to the rawest freshmen. Few there have been with the modesty of the novelist Manzoni who when asked to join Cavour's government wrote to say "that he felt himself unfit to take a part in public affairs, knowing himself to be incapable of distinguishing between the desirable and the possible."[8] And fewer still who felt remorse that their books, intended as firework displays for a small circle of friends and similar sophisticated sensitivities, should have been misinterpreted as serious calls to gunfire by the uninformed. Sir Thomas More was one such; he wrote "I would not only my darling's books [*i.e.* Erasmus'] but mine own also, help to burn them both with mine own hands, rather than folke should (though through their own fault) take any harm of them, seeing that I see them likely in these days so to do."[9] Yet such a modesty and, more precisely, such a feeling of *responsibility* are rare indeed. The chain linking the Lamartines, Byrons and Büchners to the Marcuses and Sartres is strong and continuing.[10]

For the intellectual in politics shares with the intellectual as artist an obsession with his own authentic and intense sensation rather than with the social consequences of his actions and beliefs. It is in this sense that he rejects what Beckett calls the "social expedient" of friendship, the essential condition of friendship being the acceptance of certain mutual responsibilities. It is also this overweening self-obsession, this violent, blundering search for ultimate experience which renders the intellectual such a hazard to the theatre of politics. As actor-manager Philinte is doing his best to satisfy the public, but Alceste keeps breaking into his office with wild schemes and furious accusations. Worst of all, Alceste sometimes manages to force his way on to the stage.

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[7] Samuel Beckett, *Proust* (London, 1965), p. 28.

[8] Reported by Count Balbo to Nassau Senior and recalled in the latter's *Journals Kept in France and Italy* (London, 1871), Vol. 1, p. 311.

[9] *The Confutation of Tyndale's Answer*, quoted in Melvin J. Lasky, "The Sweet Dream," (ENCOUNTER, October 1969).

[10] Some of the links in this chain are well described by Renee Winegarten, "Literary Revolutionism," *Commentary*, June 1970.

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Justus George Lawler

The Prisoner of Fat

NEAR THE END of the Year-of-the-Raw-and-the-Cooked (which is to say, the fall of '69), there were rumours that he would be made a Chevalier of the Order of the Tâte-vin. Then a perfect flurry: invitations for guest appearances on "The Galloping Gourmet," interviews with Bess Meyerson, pleas from the wire-services. "It's impossible," he said. After twenty-one years of public life he knew better; he was no longer a *poulet de printemps*, but a seasoned gastronome. True, his *Beer Lark* had come close to winning that most coveted of American awards, the Pullet Prize, while his *The Baked and the Fed* had brought him at the very beginning of his career the nomination for the National Cook Award. Even his *Advertisements for My Shellfish* had been commended by the Ecole Cordon Bleu.

"I'm not going to get it. There's been some mistake." He had been in the pressure cooker too long to believe that he, over so many others, would be able to add to his name the signifying letters COT. How could one really look Julia Childs in the eye? Or even P. S. Feibelman? No, obviously this was nothing but a red herring, a gaffe or joke by the media. Still, the initials COT racked his brain. Maybe the rumour *was* launched by some rotten egg of a reporter; yet the letters teased for employment, a cryptogram for *cocotte à la crème*; he mused, COT, a bed, a house, Bobby Burns' "my love's in the cot." All things are one, he reflected, driven by the philosophical bent which was his second nature: it's all cookery and crockery, the message and the media, the one and the many, the *hen* and the *pan*. Henology had indeed always been his bag, his *papillote*—so to speak.

All day the phone was ringing. People had heard on television that he was up for the prize. No, he would tell them, he was not about to win. With his well-honed sense of self-diffidence, his cleaver-sharp sense of the cup-lip irony, he kept reminding himself of the memorable words of Alice B. Toklas in her great *Cookbook*: "It is certainly a mistake to allow a reputation for cleverness to be born and spread by loving friends." Miss Toklas, to be sure, was writing of her putative skill in strangling squabs. By evening arrived the true report. The grapevine was full of withered raisins. The new Chevalier, *sans* beer and *sans* poach, was Herman Mueller, author of *Mein Kochbuch*. He snorted in disdain, *Kochbuch*, ach! cockleburrs and cowburgers and *Kokonussbonbons*. Well, as Cummings and Escoffier would have said, "Exit the *hors d'oeuvres*."

That left him with his initials, Chevalier of the Order of the Tâte-vin, Prize Fellow. After a while it was natural to use the shortened form; hadn't he always preferred *tartelettes* to tarts, *le mode mineur*? COTPF was clumsy, evoking some Teutonic confection, like Herr Mueller's *Koteletten-Kalbskopf*. PF it would be. *Pâté de foie* or Prize Fellow; it was all the same. Indeed, Prisoner of Fat or even Phallic Fantasy; that too was all the same, the unity of the upper and the lower, each delighting in its own way at the prospect of a hot dish. What had the poet said? Was it Suckling? You bet your braised brains it was.

'Tis not the meat, but 'tis the appetite
Makes eating a delight,
And if I like one dish
More than another, that a Pheasant is.

Here, as he had written so frequently, was the true marriage of psyche and soma, the delicate nexus of uvula and vulva, of palate and plexus, the seven-course mystic bond of interior and exterior, the authentic originating punctum of the metaphysic of high and low, spirit and flesh; the splendid com-

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munal harmonic, binding vaginal vegetarians and clitoral carnivores; in sum, here was a total ontology, owing nothing to Lévi-Strauss, which joined all the antipodal elements from—he often thought—soup to nuts. This was his vision, a heady *esthétique*, first set forth in *An American Cream* to counter the ethnocentric myths of Montagni and Nignon, that only Devonshire should be used in *Crème de laitues*—the latter being, as everyone now acknowledged, the essential nourishment of great wenchers and great trenchers: those two also being one.

So, feeling rather cavalierly about the loss of his chevaliership, the PF fled to Maine to work on his long-delayed opus, a cookbook that would deservedly win him the *grand prix de cuisine*, a cookbook that would make the competition's recipes look —in the words of Thomas Carlyle—like "*fricassée* of dead dog." But the juices wouldn't flow; he found himself thinking in the constipative metaphors of a Céline, in the coprophiliac imagery of a Swift, rather than in the fecundating, nurturing figural speech so characteristic of his earlier works. For escape, the Prisoner turned to lobsters, succulent and potted, preparing them *à la Dunkerquoise*, as bisque or soufflé, and because he truly loved this land, *à l'Américaine*. But the mood remained thermidorean; a bitter reaction against his long-bemoaned failure to render every globule of his brain tissue and produce the great lipoid epic of exogenous metabolism.

Verily the themes of his life had gathered here. But though the chapter headings were clear, the skeleton needed fleshing out. He had long since rejected the principles of revolutionary cooking—rotisseries were out —and taken his stand as a Left Conservative: food was for nourishment *and* for pleasure. To seek the latter at the expense of the former was to frustrate the ordinance of that Supreme Chef, the maximum Maxim, in whose great vessel, suspended over the abyss of chaos—like Milton's cosmos from the ramparts of Paradise—all humankind was simmering and fermenting. Thus dehydrated comestibles were anathema, as were all those new pills which provided only a gross sham, a pharmaceutical simulacrum, a crum, of a real feed. Cursed were those who claimed to be liberated from fat through this apothecarial and apocryphal nurture-on-demand. He looked upon McCollum and Davis' discovery of the first vitamin as the dividing of the image, as in fact, the nutrimental and intramental Original Sin. He had written one of his earliest essays on the evils of cod-liver oil as supplier of vitamin A, and the uproar that ensued upon his cod piece still identified him in the vulgar mind as the *enfant terrible* of cookery.

How dare these technicians separate the fat-soluble factor from butter fat? How dare they overturn the harmonious unities that had governed nurtural relations from the beginning of time, indeed *ab ovo*? They had unleashed the demons, and there was now no limit to the incursions of these white-smocked laboratory functionaries into this most sacred of human activities, the companional symposium, the convivium of bread-breaking. Had not the Prisoner's gorge risen when first reading of Schouteden's ergograph which measured micrometrically the nurture of food? A diabolic machine that

> . . . recorded the mechanical work done by successive contractions of one hand, when it worked in unison with a metronome, lifting a weight attached to a string which passed over a pulley. The contractions of the muscles were continued while they passed through progressive fatigue to exhaustion.

To the chorus of applause that greeted these Engineers of Eating, these Ohs! and Ahs! of the mob—to these the Prisoner could only retort not with "how marvellous," but with "how obscene." Was this the arrowhead of the new order, the liberation of eating from joy, a universe of isolated proteins, factory vitamins, reconstituted cyclamates, and artificial flavours?

Nurture without pleasure was as bad as pleasure without nurture; here again, the two were but separate sides of the one reality, and their divorce demanded that as more tasteless fabricated foods were ingested, more sterile, non-nutritive kicks were required: the backlash of pills and vitamins and additives was more tobacco and martinis and pot. But the revolutionary schism of nurture-pleasure was not irreparable; he himself could heal it, though the depth of

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the job did not delight him. He would insorb the dull tracts of the Liberationists, would con their recipes and read their books, then girding his loins would go forth against the powers of the new eating revolution to extol the invigorating ecstasy of a good healthy feed. Man's primordial ontological unity would be reasserted.

The Prisoner's book would itself be something to be tasted and chewed. He could envision paeans of orotund prose to the sweet pleasures of snacking, those nimble kisses, slight and fleeting and enticing, of the true feeder; then a panegyric to the random foreplay of antipasto. For mastication, a dithyramb. Had not Gladstone required his children to chew each morsel of food forty times? Had not the great physician Sir Andrew Clark rightly exhausted the whole encyclopaedia of masticatory gaiety in his dictum that every mouthful should be chewed thirty-two times to "give each tooth a chance"? What pearly pleasures there in that dental democracy. Then, finally, the climax of the feed, the great gorging good, the *summum bonum*, as tongue and soft palate are elevated, epiglottis declining, larynx closing, the posterior pharyngeal wall contracting, the esophagus dilating—all a great concert of autonomous-heteronomous activity, while cam-like but comely the nurturing bliss passes into the network and reticulations of the blood stream. The concept was so immediate to him, so intense, that the Prisoner had to wipe his fevered forehead. *That* would do them in, the whole league of gas-eating, pillule-prone revolutionaries.

His musings on The Great Book were interrupted by a call from Gael Greene, herself a dainty dish, a one-time table-mate with whom he had fallen out because she couldn't tell a *croquenbouche* from a *croquignole*. The information was conveyed to the Prisoner that the aerophagous standard-bearer of the Fat Liberation Movement had challenged him to enter the Pilsbury Bake-off.

Now the issue and tissue were joined. To be the centre of any situation was, he sometimes thought, the real marrow of his bone —the truffles on the *tournedos*—and so he accepted the gauntlet. He did not brood over the conversation. He put out of his mind all theoretical considerations; dismissed for the time being was all thought of his long, concluding chapter on gastrin in the pyloric antrum, the function of secretagogues, the marvels of the submucosal plexus, and the whole miracle of cephalic-hormonal cooperation. This was no time for speculation. The clarion was to action, and he had always lauded himself on being a man of precisely that.

He would create, not with his mind alone (however much he prided himself on its acuity), but with his hands, a gastro-aesthetic structure of such lofty nurture and joy as to convert the most addicted, air-swallowing vitaminised Liberationist. With his own hands, aided by the Lord of Health, he would make such a delicacy as would have lured Persephone from gloomy Dis, and awakened Keats' Madeleine from her death-deep sleep: "All cates and dainties shall be stored there." With an ivory pestle would he grind the fruit of Ceres, not "with fingers harsh and rude," but gently, like a Tokyo masseuse, would he coax the kernel from its husk, tweeze away the empty shell, sough upon the womb-like vessel till the irregular, misshapen, heavier grains vanished. No wheaten flour for this, bleached and bland; no maize nor rye, but a pungent European grain of finest stock. This would be the bake-off to end all bake-offs; an apocalyptic recipe for an eschatological cate. The Prisoner hummed to himself as he ground the millet in the mortar; this was his great practical achievement; the triumph of his art; the making of what he was already referring to as his "Millet Cate."

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John Mander

St Patrick's Purgatory

Notebook in Ireland

ST PATRICK'S PURGATORY is the place where you go to dine on bread and black tea once a day, to do penance on bleeding knees from station to station, mortifying the flesh and refreshing the soul. It is in historical Ulster, and is identified as the spot where St Patrick wrestled mightily with the Devil and finally expelled him from Ireland. Finally? Well, St Patrick's Purgatory is also a state of mind, and this is part of the story that even the most devout Catholic must find hard to believe. Ulster is certainly the province of Ireland where He is most active just now. Let us grant that St Patrick was a powerful man of God. But he had a deplorable handicap, which may explain why the Devil, though worsted, made an illicit re-entry, and why He was never entirely expelled from Erin's shores. St Patrick, they say, was an Englishman.

THAT NO ENGLISHMAN can understand Ireland is, of course, axiomatic to Irishmen of all sorts and conditions: it is an article of faith as much for Orangemen as for Catholics. If it were wholly true, of course, this account could not be written, still less believed. But there is a flaw in the axiom, which is of more than passing interest. It is not only that one has heard the same argument from Hungarians and Japanese, Arabs and Ibos and Poles—so that logically no foreigner can understand and comment on the condition of any country but his own. There is something more. It is true enough that Britain has misruled and misunderstood Ireland—misruled, in large part, because she has misunderstood—since the time of Strongbow and his Anglo-Normans. But the effects on both sides in this ancient conflict have been significantly different, and far from irrelevant to what is happening today. The "invader" may never have understood the "natives"; but, with equal certainty, the natives have never understood the invader.

Why should this matter now, when most Irishmen have been either self-governing or semi-self-governing for half a century? It matters, of course, because of what we read in the papers every day: people are getting killed, the innocent along with the not-so-innocent. But it matters also because the receding tide of Empire has left us with a situation where the "invaders"—*i.e.* ourselves—have simply lost interest in the "natives", much as they have lost interest in India, Malaya or Malawi. The IRA, from what one hears, is well aware of this, and is known to find the British Opinion polls most encouraging. (A recent poll: 59% for "withdrawal"; 35% for "sticking it out.") There seems no reason why these figures should not get worse—to their delight. By the same token, the Orange majority is becoming deeply perturbed, as is evident from the activities of the vigilantes and "rifle clubs" and, indeed, from the general slide to the Right which would almost certainly give Mr Ian Paisley or Mr Craig an overwhelming majority if elections were to be held tomorrow.

IN MANY WAYS, one comes to realise, the Green and the Orange are mirror-images of one another. There is, for instance, their curiously primitive "tribal" or "family" structure. In the Republic, a young medical student described to me how a certain hospital in Dublin was staffed in its upper reaches solely by members of the O'Reilly (not the real name) extended-family. He told me frankly that only the right family and political connections ("Daddy, which side did *you* fight on in the last Troubles?") could ensure him the job he wanted. But was it different in the North? Catholics make up 50% of the medical student population, but it is rarely that a top consultancy goes to a Catholic, so tight is the Orange grip. But for all these resemblances, there is a significant difference. If I may offer an analogy, I would compare the Catholics of North and South to those forgotten "natives" of India or Malaya or Malawi. The Protestant Orangemen, on the other hand, I would be inclined to compare to the followers of Mr Ian Smith. They are British enough while Britain can be of use to them—but how quickly, and with how little fuss, did the "loyalists" of Rhodesia discard both Queen and Flag when they could no longer manipulate the mother country! It could well prove the same should the other Ian come to power in Ulster after a British withdrawal.

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IT IS CONSTANTLY impressed on one that both sides tend to inhabit worlds of illusion. The Unionist Illusion, of course, is the one I have referred to above—the belief that the British will always look after their own, that the Empire is still effectively there, splendid and powerful, ready to back up its loyal supporters with unlimited money and armed force. Of course, in real military terms, the Orange sense of superiority is not entirely illusory. These are men with a long military tradition—never much developed in the Catholic community, despite all the fighting talk—and they know two things to be true, which you will find few of the Catholic community (North or South) willing to accept. I was told, quite seriously, by a student acquaintance, that in August 1969 "a million Irishmen would have been willing to march on the North. . . ." Another version of the story has it that the Irish Cabinet was actively considering the seizure of Derry across the Ulster border, and that when Mr Kevin Boland in August 1969 left the Cabinet room in a rage, his colleagues were not quite sure whether he might not be putting some such plan into operation. Yet it is widely known that the Republic has no armed forces which would count in modern terms (one tank out of six that works, no modern Air Force, three ships—or so Irishmen will tell you, with careful self-depreciation). Nor is there any realisation of the kind of fire-power available nowadays to even a relatively small number of professionals. The Orangeman, then, can comfort himself with the thought that if Britain should invade the "rebel" Republic it would almost certainly be a case of dinner in Belfast and breakfast in Dublin—or maybe even Cork. But, secondly, the Protestants believe—and believe rightly, I am convinced—that the civil war which Mr Paul Johnson and Mr Richard Crossman (and now Senator Kennedy, echoing as always "radical chic" sentiments) would have us provoke by withdrawing the British Army would be won by them in a matter of days. I hope and pray that it will not happen; but it is all too likely that Dr Conor Cruise O'Brien, in his reply to Mr Crossman in the *New Statesman*, is right to predict a "wholesale massacre" of Belfast and other Northern Catholics as the result of this policy. A similar policy, claims Mr Crossman, "solved" the Palestine problem. He can try saying that again.

THE CATHOLIC ILLUSION is rather different, rather less easy to pin down, but possibly the greater danger. It is a mythology that is abundantly rooted, needless to say, in Irish history—or, rather, in Irish history as taught by the Christian Brothers and retailed in song, poem, and pub-talk to the "common Irishry." In principle, it is the exact reverse of the mentality of the "invader." The Catholic has forgotten nothing; the invader—though not, of course, the Orangeman—has forgotten all. Of course, the Catholic memory is selective: it is forgotten that one Pope blessed Henry II's invasion of Ireland, and another rejoiced at William's triumph on the Boyne. It is also forgotten that among the first Plantations were those in the former King's County and Queen's County—the King being Philip of Spain, and the Queen Catholic Mary of England.

It is always a pleasure to disagree with Mr Crossman, and I take the liberty of doing so again. In a recent "Irish Diary" he writes:

> They now like the English, who allow them to enter the U.K. freely, and make money to go back home, build a house and live at ease. . . .

Dr O'Brien comments that the stock response to this in Dublin would be: "Grateful? To *England*? Are you mad?" I am not sure whether Mr Crossman is aware of the subtle difference in Irish usage—pointed out to me by a former IRA adviser—between "English" and "British." If you are speaking of the English in, say, Mr Crossman's Coventry constituency, then it is quite true that the "English" as such are not hated, any more than are the Scots or the Welsh. But the moment you use the term "British" in Ireland—or so my IRA contact assures me—you arouse a quite different set of emotions. British is always bad, in every context, and at every period. "The British", to be sure, are really an abstraction, and I think a false one; but they are an abstraction devoutly believed in by almost every non-Unionist Irishman. They can do, will do, and have done nothing right by Ireland. All of Ireland's ills can be—so conveniently—credited to the Briton. He is, in truth, evil incarnate: the Devil St Patrick failed to drive from Erin's shores fifteen centuries ago.

I DO NOT THINK I exaggerate or distort in asserting that I never, in several dozen conversations, detected any expression of gratitude whatever, any benefit of doubt offered, once the conversation turned to the subject of "the British." I was speaking, for example, to an old acquaintance, a solicitor in Galway, and he remarked casually: "The British must be grateful, I suppose, for all the Irish labour we're providing them with to build

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their motorways and so on. . . ." *The British*, you see, must be grateful (not, as Mr Crossman would have it, the Irish). And so it goes. Universal primary education, for example, was established in Ireland some thirty years before it became the law of England. There are historians who have argued that this was perhaps the most significant piece of enlightened legislation "the British" ever introduced in Ireland; personally, I would go along with that. But I think it is hardly possible for an Irishman to see it in that light. It was an attempt, he would say, to follow up the "Penal Laws" of the 1690s—with a piece of legislation calculated to destroy Irish language and culture. Of course, I do not want to deny that Britain's behaviour in Ireland is perhaps the most shocking element in our national history; and I believe that most Englishmen feel this to be the case (though I doubt whether many Irishmen would believe this, and not condemn it as another piece of "British hypocrisy"). But the trouble with this blanket condemnation is that it not only makes relations between Irishmen and Englishmen—on the political plane—almost impossible, but renders Irish history itself unintelligible.

For the truth is—as no historian, or even passing observer of the Irish scene, can fail to see—that Ireland has absorbed far too much of England to be able to spew her forth. It follows, I think, that a thorough-going Irish nationalism must be somewhat schizophrenic. Thus the sad truth about the Irish language—that it is dying, and has little hope of resurrection—simply cannot be told. One is assured that "more people can read and understand Gaelic than ever before. . . ." This is perfectly true—but only because the subject is compulsory at school. Yet it means no more than to assert, say, that 18th-century English members of Parliament could read and even exchange quips in Latin. Latin was, for all this, just as dead a language in the England of the 18th century as Gaelic is for the vast majority of Irishmen today. It can be argued, I think, that English would have replaced Irish as the language of Ireland in any case—indeed Daniel O'Connell, the Liberator, is known to have opposed the revival of Gaelic as a retrograde step for Ireland. (Nor would the Catholic hierarchy have disagreed.) My friend Mr Austin Clarke, the poet, argues that the correct course would have been for the Irish government to *ban* teaching in Gaelic. The Irish, being what they are, would then unfailingly have made heroic efforts to keep the old language alive.

THIS IS NOT to ridicule—as many foreigners do—the attempt to keep alive the language which most Irishmen still spoke up to the Act of Union, and even as late as the Potato Famine. There are sophisticated arguments for making it available to future generations, such as Mrs Maire Cruise O'Brien's in a recent collection of essays about Ireland.[1] Apart from the great merits of Gaelic literature itself (and one can judge this from the recently published *Penguin Book of Irish Verse* edited by Brendan Kennelly), Anglo-Irish speech as it exists today, and much of the great poetry and drama of the Literary Revival, were profoundly influenced by Gaelic speech-rhythms and syntax—even where, as with Yeats, the command of Gaelic was minimal. It is certainly arguable that a knowledge of Gaelic is as necessary to an Irishman who wishes to understand his own past as a passable knowledge of French, Latin and Greek is to the student of English literature. But, if we accept this argument, we must in logic assent to its complement. Just as Gaelic syntax and modes of thinking have helped to form the Irish mind, so has the English element in "Anglo-Irish" moulded the mind of modern Ireland—it cannot, as I say, be spewed forth.

Yet that is what the more extreme nationalists often attempt to do. I well remember an interview with Mr De Valera some years ago during which I spoke with ill-judged enthusiasm of the Literary Revival—and in particular of Yeats' Tower (then in ruins) which I had just visited. The response surprised me then, though I do not think it would now: "I am glad that you like our *Anglo-Irish* literature . . . But what would that tower be that you're speaking of?" Of course, Yeats was no admirer of Dev: he saw him, like Oliver St John Gogarty, as "the Spanish onion in the Irish stew." But it was made plain to me that, while what I was praising might well be praiseworthy, it could never hope to be *Irish*. Equally, of course, the chief architectural glories of Ireland—its Georgian towns and mansions—must be spewed forth. They, too, are not *Irish*. Asked once which he held to be the senior city in Ireland, Dev is said to have replied: "Belfast!" Mystifying? Not at all. Dublin, you see, was the work of the English—or, to be strictly accurate, of "the British." This is the Catholic Illusion, I suppose, taken to its fanatical, fantastical extreme. But I think the motivation underlying such judg-

[1] *Conor Cruise O'Brien introduces Ireland*, André Deutsch (1969).

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ments is clear enough: nationalist, Republican Ireland would dearly like to get everything "Anglo" out of her system—but only by destroying a major part of her own heritage can she hope to do so.

OF COURSE, IT MAY BE SAID that the Ireland of the 1970s is a very different place from what it was ten years ago. That is quite true; the Republic is now reasonably prosperous, the consumer society is in full spate, and the old closed-in, bigoted, defensive, "Green Populist" society which Dev fostered is giving way to an open, urbanised, secular society. The side-effects may be unfortunate: a great ribbon of standardised, suburban-type villas threatens to reach from Killarney to Sligo, blotting out the picturesque, if insanitary, cabins of the traditional West. Ten years ago, one seemed to pass a donkey at every other crooked corner of the roads of Clare and Connemara: this time I spotted no more than a very few. The Gypsies are still there—the Government is trying to get them to settle but (as elsewhere) the travelling people are not having it. Still, an observer has to be careful: you can now become an "instant Gypsy" by hiring specially-made gypsy-type wagons for your holiday in the West. And there are those "medieval dinners", served at Bunratty Castle by "willing wenches"—only a few taxi-minutes from Shannon International Airport. One should not mock: the little cabins with their peat fires in the adjoining "Folk-Park" may soon be the last you can hope to see in Ireland. One should not be sentimental, even if they have wrecked Eyre Square in Galway by a lamentably permanent memorial to that son of the Auld Sod, John Fitzgerald Kennedy. The new prosperity is surely an unmitigated good—especially so, if it has done something to lessen the hateful pressures and tensions handed down by Irish history.

But has it? I took with me to Ireland two recent guides to the country—Dr O'Brien's *Introduction* and the *Shell Guide*. Both end their historical reviews on the kind of upbeat note I have hinted at above: the old Ireland is dead and gone; it is time to bring in a new. They make sad reading, now, only three years after publication. For the fact must be faced that the events of this new Time of Troubles have brought Ireland back to square one. The old Illusion was not a-dying, but rather latent in the Irish psyche. The substance of the old Illusion, I suggested, was the presumption that all Ireland's ills were the fault of "The British" —though there were always individual Englishmen and Protestants, from Wolfe Tone to Parnell, from Douglas Hyde to Erskine Childers, who had earned History's pardon by their actions.

The Old Illusion, I fear, is still there—it is the way Irish boys and girls are brought up to look at their history in school. But the old Illusion has become united with a new, presently fashionable illusion, as false as it is dangerous. As Mr John Grigg has pointed out in his ENCOUNTER article, it is widely believed that the British were *beaten* militarily in 1921. That this is quite false is apparent not only from Michael Collins' own admission, but from the course of the subsequent Civil War. The might shadow cast by Eamon De Valera might well give the impression that he won that war. But the point is that his anti-Treaty faction, for all their popular support, faced military *defeat* during the Civil War. And the reason is plain: Dev's IRA, instead of fighting a guerrilla war which they could have kept up for years, opted for positional warfare against an enemy plentifully supplied with the heavy weapons the British had left behind. One may well guess that it is the British Army's dearest wish that today's IRA might make the same mistake: the IRA would then lose the war in weeks rather than years.

IT IS HARDLY SURPRISING, in soil where this Old Illusion has taken such deep root, to find that the mythology of the New Left flourishes exuberantly. I was told in the same breath (and how many times!) that not only had Britain "caved in" at the sound of gun-fire in Ireland in 1920, but that it had done the same in Palestine, Malaya, Kenya, Cyprus and elsewhere. Likewise, of course, the French in Indo-China and Algeria, and the Americans and their allies in present-day Viet Nam. "The-guerrilla-always-wins" is the contemporary Irish version of Baldwin's "the-bomber-will-always-get-through." It is a view that is not, as far as I can see, well-founded in historical evidence. There are plenty of examples to illustrate the relatively poor chances of the guerrilla—except in certain unusually favourable conditions. Malaya, of course, is one: it is perhaps the classical case of a long-drawn-out, but ultimately successful anti-guerrilla campaign. Greece would be another. In Kenya and Cyprus it is generally agreed that the British Army fought the gunmen to a standstill. In the Philippines, too, the Huks were finally beaten. And if we take the cases where "we" have played the guerrilla—or lent him support, as during the last War—the answer seems to

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come out much the same. Can one doubt that the outcome of the World War would have been precisely the same (militarily, that is, not morally—a very different matter) had there been *no* resistance movements inside Hitler's Europe? Surely not; Hitler's armies could only be beaten by forces with comparable equipment and comparable training in the ruling tactics and strategy of that time. Where then, and why, one might well ask, *has* the guerrilla succeeded? In Arabia, under Lawrence? In South Africa, under Kruger? In Cuba or Bolivia, under Castro or Che Guevara? Evidently not. Are the French defeats in Indo-China and Algeria, then, the exceptions that proved the rule? It would almost seem so.

But one important factor is left out when guerrilla warfare is on the agenda. We forget our Clausewitz, not to speak of our Marx: guerrilla warfare is the continuation of political struggle by other means. It is this all-important *political* factor that gets omitted in discussions of the present Irish situation. Why did Algeria gain her independence? For the same reason, I suggest, that Ireland got hers in 1921. In military terms, nobody doubts that the French and the British *could* have held on indefinitely in both situations. But in both situations it had long become clear that the overwhelming majority of the population was lost to the mother country in *political* terms—which was certainly not the case in Malaya or Greece or Kenya. The origin of Lloyd George's willingness to come to terms in 1921 lies far more, I am convinced, in the sweeping election victory of Sinn Fein at the Coupon Election of 1918 (when Redmond's Irish Party was well-nigh wiped out) than in the stalemate situation which we know to have been reached militarily in 1921. Few Catholics can be brought to admit it: but the truth is that Lloyd George, the former pro-Boer and co-guarantor of a dozen, new, small nations at Versailles (and himself, like his confidant, Tom Jones, a member of a small Celtic nation), could not indefinitely pursue a policy so contrary to all that he and the mass of the British people stood for. After all, Home Rule had been Liberal Policy for a good forty years. It had got on to the Statute Book in 1914; it was ratified, patently, by the result of the 1918 election. The result of the negotiations in 1921 was much the same as it was forty years later in Cyprus: the British got what they wanted—the Treaty Ports and a separate government for the North—and the Southern Irish got the political independence which the Liberals had promised them in 1914.

NEEDLESS TO SAY, this is not a version of history that is easy to put across in Ireland at the present day. The new mythology fits all too comfortably into the old, and it was perhaps inevitable that the new cult of the guerrilla—and now, especially, of the urban guerrilla—should have caught the imagination of Irish youth as it has caught that of youth in other countries. (Incidentally, when and where have urban guerrillas ever succeeded? In Warsaw? In Budapest? In Algiers?) In this context, it is important to emphasise that Irish Marxists—few and far between as they are—do not support the Provisionals' thesis that Stormont could be toppled by guerrilla action alone. I received confirmation of this from Dr Roy Johnston, often credited with infusing Marxist thinking into the "Official" IRA of the mid-1960s.[2] He felt that the weakness of the "Provisionals" was that they had no thought-out strategy, that they had proved their destructive abilities, but shown little sign of being able to follow this up with a serious political programme—although, ironically, a thought-out programme is what British journalists so often give them credit for. I asked him frankly whether he felt that something like a stalemate situation had been reached—that the "Provisionals" had achieved all they could hope to achieve, but would find themselves unable to go further. He agreed. Only coordinated action between the Catholic and Protestant working class could create a "truly revolutionary situation" in Ireland—and Belfast is still the most industrialised region of the country. I did not think this likely. No, he replied, nor did he in present circumstances: the "Provisionals" were merely driving the Protestant working class into the arms of the Orange Right.

He did not, it is true, call them by the name they best deserve—"Green Fascists"—as Conor Cruise O'Brien has done. Dr O'Brien would seem to most foreigners to be one of the most considerable men to have come out of Ireland since the Troubles—whether or not one agrees with his views on Katanga, Dag Hammarskjöld, and so on. The outside world demands a "moderate" to help it understand, and hopefully sort out, the Irish situation. No wonder, then, that the media have seized on Dr

[2] He is more modest about his role and feels it to have been much exaggerated: he is something of a Trotskyist loner, and certainly neither "a member of the British Communist Party" nor someone "who refuses to see British journalists" as a recent *Observer* series informed us.

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O'Brien as a man, patently candid and intelligent, who occupies just this middle ground. That he does so, in a situation where "things fall apart, the centre cannot hold", seems to me impressive. But if the foreigner, having delightedly found what he set out to find, proceeds to present him as "typical", a few days in Dublin will quickly disillusion him.

"The Irish", as Dr Johnson observed, "are a fair people: they never speak well of one another". At various times, I listened to Dr O'Brien being denounced as a "Gladstonian Liberal", as someone who was "sucking up to the British", as someone who cared more for his international reputation than for his native Ireland, from which he has been away so long, and—like the rest of us—doesn't understand. Thick-skulled as these comments may be, they demand to be recorded. If Dr O'Brien loves and understands Ireland, Ireland does not love or understand him. When he was out in Katanga, he was wildly popular among the Irish—almost as popular as Kennedy—because he was seen as a true, missionary Irishman doing great deeds in the world for Ireland and other "small nations." But Katanga is far away, and Howth is uncomfortably near. Here he is the traditional "big fella"; and the Irish seem to be somewhat ambivalent about their "big fellas" such as Parnell, Collins or De Valera. They may make fine statues on College Green or down O'Connell Street; but the newly affluent middle class of Ireland feels more comfortable with a Jack Lynch.

SO IS THERE no "middle ground", no possible consensus, and thus no solution to the three-year-old crisis? The answer, I think, depends on whether you tackle people in public or in private. In private, in random encounters, I met no one who openly *supported* the IRA "Provisionals." Typical, perhaps, was the old lady in Derry who said that she remembered the Troubles quite well, but that this was not the same thing at all. "Well because, y'see, it was all over in two weeks then, at least here in Derry. But this time it's gone on for three years. . . ." Now if this sentiment is "typical" (as I believe it is) it follows that the "capture" of the Northern Catholics by the "Provisionals" is a good deal less complete than we are given to believe. These people are frightened; but they are now becoming more frightened of their IRA "protectors" than of "The British." It is a well-attested fact that the IRA failed in its campaign ten years ago because it lacked real support among the people; and also because the Irish Republic felt strong enough to bring in internment. It is too readily assumed—foreign journalists seem to take to IRA propaganda like wasps to honey—that a "monolithic front" of anti-Unionists exists which the British will never be able to penetrate. Again and again, I was assured that the IRA organisation was absolutely "intelligence-proof." Yet a Nationalist friend, no supporter but a man who should know, informed me that when the Provisionals were around his (Catholic) quarter of Derry the people would whisper "there's strangers around tonight"—in other words, the IRA does not use local men, but imports its gunmen from other areas. One can well see why it does this. But it did not occur to my friend that this must lay the IRA wide-open to infiltration: a "stranger" could as well be a planted as an actual IRA man. If Tim Pat Coogan's study, *The IRA* (Fontana, 1971) is to be credited, it would seem to be flying in the face of Irish history to accept the view that the IRA even approaches the Algerian FLN or the Viet Cong in discipline and efficiency. As every Irishman knows, Ireland's history is a history of betrayals; of betrayals by the British—but no less of betrayals by the Irish themselves.

A REASONABLE GUESS, then, is that perhaps 90% of people in both communities wish—in private—that the whole thing would go away. Those visiting journalists from Ireland and from Britain who take the IRA at its own valuation and talk of "monolithic support" for the gunmen do neither of their countries much service. The majority of Irishmen, North and South, want peace and law and order. Respectability is an exceedingly potent factor in modern Ireland—and I was given to understand, again and again, not so much (as one might hope) that the IRA was evil, but that it was something to be ashamed of because it was not quite respectable. ("People like you and us wouldn't be doing that sort of thing, now would we?")

But to say this in private is one thing, to say it in public another. What I found startling was that while I found none prepared to support the IRA absolutely, I also found none ready to repudiate the IRA absolutely. With the elected spokesmen of the minority it is, of course, a different matter. They know that if they said what they really think about the Provisionals their own lives would be in peril. It is not reasonable, then, to expect them to be seen cooperating with Stormont while this threat hangs over them. But much the same, I fear, is true of ordinary people. They cannot speak out and they know that,

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overhaul the political machine as we will, the Protestants (65% of a population of 1½ million) will always remain the majority, and that the Orange ranks are tighter than ever. (Indeed, I would say that the emergence of the IRA has made the North safe for King Billy for another half-century). And, for all the corruption and repression that has grown up over the past fifty years, we have to remember in the last resort that while minorities have rights, majorities surely have them too. Stormont was set up by Westminster, agreed to by the Free State Ministers: it is a legal entity, and is supported by more than half the population. There could, surely, be no greater folly than to abolish it in favour of "direct rule" from London, and the distinct possibility that the British would then have to be battling both sides.

WHAT, THEN, IS to be done? It is easy to say that the answer lies in reforms. In the long run, of course, it must. But I do not think it illogical to argue that "reforms" must go hand-in-hand with a much more effective line towards the terrorists and those who help them. It is often argued that reforms are needed to win over the *Catholic* population But that is to get the priorities wrong. The first essential is to win over the *Protestants* and convince them that there is no question of a British sell-out. "Reforms" must be so introduced that they do justice to the Catholics, but in no way undermine the regional authority of Stormont. Internment[3] is an evil in any democratic state. Still, it was used successfully in Ireland by both North and South in the 1950s, and it is bound to be with us as long as the shootings and bombings go on. When I say "internment must stay"—as does Mr Wilson—I am assuming that the Compton Report on "ill-treatment" will have its effect and a careful check be kept in future on what actually goes on in Long Kesh.

My objection to Mr Wilson's Re-Unification plan is not that it is not reasonable—most of it is admirably so—but that in Irish conditions it is reasonable to the point of unrealism. Predictably, it has met with general support in England; but each Irish interest has welcomed only those parts of it that fit into their programmes. Unfortunately, it contains (in my view) just enough political gelignite for it to blow up in the faces of either side should they seriously try to put it into practice.

I do not wish to seem to play down the "reforms". But it's a phrase that can trip off the tongue a little too easily. Any reader of Mr Liam de Paor's excellent Penguin *Divided Ulster* will soon appreciate that the complex system of Protestant Ascendancy that pervades life in Northern Ireland is not one that can be dismantled overnight by "reforms"—indeed, it is doubtful whether Parliamentary action can deal with the more devious aspects of it at all. Mr de Paor shows that it is much too deeply rooted for that—far more deeply rooted, for sure, than is the IRA in the Catholic community. The point is that Stormont must push the reforms through, and there are many observers who see no reason to assume that they might not be as well—"perhaps better"—put into effect by the Reverend Ian Paisley than by the present rather shaky régime. This may well be the kind of situation (say some in Ulster) where "extremists make the best moderates." Yet, as many have concluded, none of this will be of avail—harsh though this sounds in my ears—until the people of Northern Ireland, on both sides, are made to feel the presence of British power—"what other nation would have put up with the absurd 'Free Derry' situation, and not bulldozed the Bogside long ago? The French?" The passivity of the British Army was no doubt calculated. But it had the effect of supporting the Catholic Illusion in a situation where it was essential that it should be broken down. Only after a certain measure of disillusionment is it possible to get at the root of the trouble. We shall pay for it, in more senses than one; and it will not find much popular support in the rest of Britain. Perhaps it is the price to be paid for expiation of the sins of our fathers. What lies before us—before both sides in the struggle—is St Patrick's Purgatory. But that is still better than Limbo, and better than Hell, even if there is little chance of Paradise just around the corner.

[3] This often appears as "interment" in the Irish press, long a joy for misprint collectors. "The copperation of Mr Lynch will be required" is another Joycean, and faintly sinister, item in my collection. Naturally it *will* be required.

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Edmund Burke *on the Irish Question (1796)*

(In November 1796, a Dublin merchant and a leading Catholic, John Keogh, wrote to Burke: "It is a duty to you and to your afflicted Country, that you should be truly *informed of her present state, torn as she is by merciless factions, contriving to heap new miseries on those which Ireland hath so long and so patiently endured. . . ." Burke's reply from Beaconsfield is dated 17 November.)*

IN A GENERAL WAY I am but too well acquainted with the distracted state of Ireland and with the designs of the public Enemy pointed to that Kingdom. I have my own thoughts upon the causes of those Evils. You do me Justice in saying in your letter of July, that I am a "true Irishman." Considering as I do England my Country, of long habit, of long obligation and establishment, and that my primary duties are here, I cannot conceive how a Man can be a genuine Englishman without being at the same time a true Irishman, tho' fortune should have made his birth on this side of the Water. I think the same Sentiments ought to be reciprocal on the part of Ireland, and if possible with much stronger reason. Ireland cannot be separated one moment from England without losing every source of her present prosperity, and even every hope of her future. I am very much afflicted, deeply and bitterly afflicted to see that a very small faction in Ireland should arrogate it to itself to be the whole. . . .

Contrary to all reason, experience and observation, many persons in Ireland have taken it into their heads, that the influence of the Government here has been the cause of the misdemeanors of persons in Power in that Country, and that they are suffering under the Yoke of a British Dominion—I must speak the truth—I must say, that all the evils of Ireland originate within itself. . . . England has hardly anything to do with Irish Government. I heartily wish it were otherwise; but the body of the people of England, even the most active Politicians take little or no concern in the Affairs of Ireland. . . .

18/23 November 1796

THE PRESENT STATE OF THINGS both here, and in Ireland, as well as abroad, seems to me grow every moment more critical. In Ireland it is plain they have thrown off all sort of Political management and even the decorous appearance of it. . . . They have fomented a Spirit of discord upon principle in that unhappy Country.—They have set the Protestants in the only part of the Country in which the Protestants have any degree of Strength to massacre the Catholicks. The consequence will be this . . . the violence of lawless insurrection will use the only means that is left for their protection in a league with those persons who have been encouraged to fall upon them and who are as well

WHY should one keep asking whether history repeats itself, or whether there are any lessons to be learned from history? History itself suggests the answer —that it doesn't, and there aren't. Yet if it does sometimes appear that "the more things change, the more they remain the same", the illusion reinforces the vague comfort and illumination which the reading, and sometimes even the experience itself, of history affords. But it always remains important to identify clearly the elements of continuity and change. In these remarkable letters on the Irish Question by Edmund Burke, there are striking elements of both what is different and what is the same, in tantalising combination. Much in the "Irish Troubles" has remained constant over the centuries; no less has been transformed by events of politics and economics. And yet. . . .

The texts are taken from Volume IX in the monumental "Correspondence of Edmund Burke", edited by R. B. McDowell and John A. Woods, and recently published by the Presses of the University of Chicago and of Cambridge.

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disposed to rebel against all Government, as to persecute their unoffending fellow Citizens. . . .

You [French Laurence] know that the far greater and most oppressive part of those Laws has been repealed. The only remaining grievance which the Catholicks suffer from the *Law* consists in certain incapacities relative to *Franchises*. The ill will of the governing Power is their great Grievance who do not suffer them to have the Benefit of those capacities to which they are restored, nominally, by the Law. . . . The heavy load that lies upon them is, that they are treated like Enemies, and as long as they are under any incapacities their persecutors are furnished with a legal pretence of scouring them upon all occasions and they never fail to make use of it. If this Stigma were taken off and that like their other fellow citizens, they were to be judged by their conduct, it would go a great way in giving quiet to the Country.—The fear that if they had capacities to sit in Parliament they might become the Majority and persecute in their turn is a most impudent and flagitious pretence, which those, who make use of it, know to be false. . . .

(On 27 November 1796 EARL FITZWILLIAM *(1748-1833)—the nephew and heir of Lord Rockingham; Burke had sat for his borough of Malton until his retirement from Parliament in June 1794—wrote the following to Burke.)*

I AGREE PERFECTLY with your opinion, that with respect to Irish politics, I must endeavour to make conduct here, square with the sentiments of my friends there. . . . Not a day, hardly an hour passes, that does not seem to bring the affairs of that country nearer to a crisis.—What may be the treasonable intentions of the diggers of potatoes (en masse) I will not pretend to know: it is possible, that it may be done to form magazines for an Invading enemy, and therefore Government may be justified in checking the practice. But of this I am sure; Government never can be justified in surrounding a field by the military, making the whole mob prisoners, picking out the stout and the strong, and without trial, without pretence of Law, without even an enquiry on the Drum's head. . . . It is a state of things that cannot last, if the means of escaping from it, should arise.—We may have in our mouth, Liberty and free constitution, but in the practice in Ireland, it is a state of most odious oppression and abject slavery for the great body of people—there are there, two Laws and two constitutions, one for the rich, and one for the poor. . . . If their miserable cause is not taken up, in some acknowledg'd, constituted place of authority, they will seek redress at the hands of some *unconstituted* authority, some self-created establishment, some Usurpation. For reasons in your letter, I certainly should prefer their cause being taken in its proper place, their own Parliament. . . .

(Burke replied to Earl Fitzwilliam, 30 November 1796.)

YOUR LETTER on the melancholy subject of Ireland is just what must come from a heart and understanding like yours. . . . I scarcely know where I am. But this System, and all other Evil Systems, will not only continue, but encrease and strengthen. We can do little more than lament. We are in a perpetual dilemma between Tyranny and Jacobinism; the Jacobinism too tasting of Tyranny, and the Tyranny rankly savouring of Jacobinism. . . .

(On 5 December Earl Fitzwilliam opened his reply to Burke with a critical consideration of the plans for "a Reform in parliament".)

IT IS NOT THAT the present Representation in Ireland is not a grievance: it certainly is a most crying one, and is in a great degree the cause of the misery of the lower Orders: its being so completely aristocratical, leaves the lower Orders *without protection*; and in that example we may learn, what Tyrants We Aristocrates can be, when there is no check whatever on the selfish bent of the human mind.—Happy the Country, where there is such an Alloy of Democracy, as brings the overbearing inclinations of the great to a fellow-feeling for the Low: as makes it necessary that the one should court the other. This alone will secure to the lowest an equitable share of Protection from their superiors, and renders the latter the most useful part of Society, even to the former.—But still I tremble when I see antient arrange-

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ments meddled with: there is no ascertaining when once the Dyke is cut, how far the waters will flow—and I dislike it the more, when I see the consideration takes its rise, not in a *constituted*, but in a *self-created* authority—it savours of Jacobinism. . . .

(Burke replies to Earl Fitzwilliam, 6/7 December 1796.)

THE AFFAIRS OF IRELAND become more and more complicated every hour; and the difficulty of suggesting anything to remedy the distracted State of that Country grows with the necessity of providing something of the Kind. . . . I am perfectly sensible of the mischief that must arise from the success of the [Reform] Scheme, or even from the Struggle. But what can be done . . . when neither you, nor any man living can assure them, that the Grievance they complain of can be redressed in any other way? . . .

(Fitzwilliam to Burke, 9 December 1796: in this letter he raised with Burke "the means of forcing *a total change of System".)*

HALF MEASURES will not be the cure, nor even a palliative for the rancour of the disease.—The people of Ireland must have, not only their grievances redress'd, but the assurance of the fair intentions and goodwill of the Government and a total change in its complexion.—Promises and Concessions They have had enough of, from the present Government, but they have also the experience how easily they are evaded by trick and chicane.—Nothing can recover their affection and confidence but a total change of *men*, as the only bond to be relied on, for a total change of principles.—It would be bold to say that, brought to the crisis things now are, this would do: but it is a certainty that nothing short of this will. . . .

The details of the horrors committed in the North by the Protestants against the Catholicks are what I already knew; the encouragement given to the perpetrators of these horrors by Government, had also reach'd me through other channels, as unquestionable as any, that come from K [John Keogh]. . . . But there is a part of his Representation, which wounds me to the quick; of which I was apprehensive; and foresaw from the nature of things, that it would happen sooner or later.—It is this, that the lower Orders of Catholicks have lost all confidence, not only in the Government, but in *all publick men*, and in the Gentry of their own persuasion, and even in their own Clergy.—Whoever recommends *moderation*, is a false friend, or rather an undoubted enemy They conceive—a mischief, as I said before, to have been foreseen, as necessarily arising out of the duplicity of the Government, but it is a state of mischief, that really drives one to despair . . . that country cannot be saved without the most complete change of *Men*.—It may produce no effect, but still it is the last, and the *only* chance left.—Foreseeing and fearing this worst of all evils, I have been lately urging the only men in the country, who deserve its confidence, to shew themselves in their *proper place*, still the friends and protectors of the oppress'd—to try by so doing, to keep the eyes of the people still fix'd on the true constitutional source of redress, and from wandring to something new, to Usurpers for protection. . . . We have fraterniz'd with Jacobinism, and establish'd it. . . . What advice you may give . . . I do not pretend to know, but I suspect it will be moderation, but not submission—I could not refrain from opening to you my own feelings of what is necessary to be done *here*—they are for the consideration of your sober judgement.

(Burke's reply to Earl Fitzwilliam, 9 December 1796.))

MY DEAR LORD,

I agree with you perfectly, that nothing but a very complete change of men in Ireland promises any sort of quiet or security to that distracted Kingdom. But that cannot be, without as complete a change of men, of principles, and of opinions here. The consequences, either of the continuance of the present System in both Countries, or of a total change in both, I cannot bear to contemplate. But as long as this Ministry continues, I am as sure as I am of my existence, that the sinking of that Island to the bottom of the Sea would be sooner risqued, than the change, not only of the whole of that Knot

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of low Jobbers, but even of one of the very meanest amongst them. We do not hold them up for the sake of the Government of Ireland; but we keep the Government of Ireland to accomodate them. The Rats are not tolerated, because it is hard to keep rats out of Ships, but the Ship is kept up for the Benefit of the Rats. . . .

As to what is doing here, I see nothing short of insanity. . . . I feel so uneasy, that though far from well, and tho' the weather is far from improved I think I shall go to Town tomorrow—and see a little more nearly how the land lies. . . .

P.S. On looking over this, some part of it is so improper to get into other hands that I wish it burnt.

(Burke to the Rev. Thomas Hussey, 9 December 1796.)

I HAVE NO DIFFICULTY at all in communicating to you or, if it were of any use to mankind at large, my sentiments and feelings on the dismal state of things in Ireland; but I find it difficult indeed to give you the advice you are pleased to ask, as to your own conduct in your very critical Situation.

You state, what has long been but too obvious, that it seems the unfortunate policy of the Hour, to put to the far largest portion of the Kings Subjects in Ireland, the desperate alternative, between a thankless acquiescence under grievous Oppression, or a refuge in Jacobinism with all its horrors and all its crimes. You prefer the former dismal part of the choice. There is no doubt but that you would have reasons if the election of one of these Evils was at all a security against the other. But they are things very alliable and as closely connected as cause and effect. That Jacobinism, which is Speculative in its Origin, and which arises from Wantonness and fullness of bread, may possibly be kept under by firmness and prudence. The very levity of character which produces it may extinguish it; but the Jacobinism which arises from Penury and irritation, from scorned loyalty, and rejected Allegiance, has much deeper roots. They take their nourishment from the bottom of human Nature and the unalterable constitution of things, and not from humour and caprice or the opinions of the Day about privileges and Liberties. These roots will be shot into the Depths of Hell, and will at last raise up their proud Tops to Heaven itself. This radical evil may baffle the attempts of Heads much wiser than those are, who in the petulance and riot of their drunken power are neither ashamed nor afraid to insult and provoke those whom it is their duty and ought to be their glory to cherish and protect.

So then the little wise men of the West, with every hazard of this Evil, are resolved to persevere in their manly and well timed resolution of a War, against Popery. . . . Fashion governs the World; and it is the fashion in the great French Empire of Pure and perfect Protestantism, as well as in the little busy medling Province of servile imitators that apes, at an humble distance, the Tone of its Capital, to make a crusade against you poor Catholicks. . . .

WHEN I CONSIDER the narrowness of the views and the total want of human wisdom displayed in our Western Crusade against Popery, it is impossible to speak of it but with every mark of contempt and scorn.—Yet one cannot help shuddering with horror when one contemplates the terrible consequences that are frequently the results of craft united with Folly—placed in an unnatural elevation. Such ever will be the issue of things, when the mean voices attempt to mimick the grand passions.—Great men will never do great mischief but for some great End. For this they must be in a state of inflammation and in a manner out of themselves. Among the nobler Animals whose blood is hot, the bite is never poisonous, except when the Creature is mad; but in the cold blooded reptile race, whose poison is exalted by the Chemistry of their icy complexion, their venom is the result of their health, and of the perfection of their Nature. . . .

YOU FEEL the thing very rightly—all the evils of Ireland originate within itself. That unwise body, the United Irishmen, have had the folly to represent those Evils as owing to this Country, when in truth its chief guilt is in its total neglect, its utter oblivion, its shameful indifference and its entire ignorance, of Ireland and of everything that relates to it, and

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not in any oppressive disposition towards that unknown region. No such disposition exists. English Government has farmed out Ireland, without the reservation of a pepper Corn rent in Power or influence, to the little narrow Faction that Domineers there. Thro' that alone they see, feel, hear, or understand, any thing relative to that Kingdom; nor do they in any way interfere that I know of, except in giving their countenance and the sanction of their Names to whatever is done by that *Junto*.

Ireland has derived some advantage from its independance on the Parliament of this Kingdom; or rather it did derive advantage from the arrangements that were made at the time of the establishment of that Independance. But human blessings are mixed; and I cannot but think, that even these great blessings were bought dearly enough, when along with the weight of the authority, they have totally lost all Benefit from the superintendancy of the British Parliament. Our Pride is succeeded by fear. . . .

Breves et infaustos populi Hiberni amores ["Brief and unblest the loves of the Irish people": Tacitus, *Annals*, II, 41]. . . .

THIS SYSTEM never will be abandonned as long as it bring advantage to those who adopt it.—If the Country enjoys a momentary quiet it is pleaded as an argument in favour of the good effect of wholesome rigours.—If, on the Contrary, the Country [grows] more discontented; and if riots and disorders multiply, new Arguments are furnished for giving a vigorous support to the authority of the Directory on account of the rebellious disposition of the people. So long therefore as disorders in the Country become pretexts for adding to the power and emolument of an odious Junto, means will be found to keep one part of it or other in a perpetual state of confusion and disorder. This is the old traditionary policy of that sort of men. The discontents which under them break out among the people become tenure by which they hold their situation.

I do not deny, that in these Contests the people however oppressed are frequently much to blame, whether provoked to their excesses or not; undoubtedly the Law ought to look to nothing but the Offence and to punish it. The redress of grievances is not less necessary than the punishment of disorders; but it is of another resort. In punishing however, the Law ought to be the only rule.—If it is not of sufficient force, a force, consistent with its general principles, ought to be added to it. The first duty of a State is to provide for its own conservation. Until that point is secured it can preserve and protect nothing else; but, if possible, it has a greater interest in acting according to strict Law, than even the Subject himself. For if the people see, that the Law is violated to crush them they will certainly despise the Law. They on their part will be easily Led to violate it whenever they can, by all the means in their power. Except in cases of direct War, whenever Government abandons Law, it proclaims Anarchy.

I AM WELL AWARE, (if I cared one farthing for the few Days I have to live, whether the vain breath of men blow hot or cold about me) that they who censure any Oppressive proceeding of Government are exciting the people to Sedition and revolt. If there be no oppression it is very true or if there be nothing more than the lapses, which will happen to human infirmity at all times and in the exercise of all power, such complaints would be wicked indeed.—These lapses are exceptions implied: an allowance for which is a part of the understood covenant by which Power is delegated by fallible men to other men that are not infallible; but whenever a hostile spirit on the part of Government is shewn the Question assumes another form.—This is no casual Errour, no lapse, no sudden surprise. Nor [is] it a question of civil or political Liberty. What contemptible stuff it is to say, that a Man who is lashed to Church against his conscience would not discover that the whip is painful, or that He had a conscience to be violated, unless I told him so? . . . . Would the people consider their being taken out of their beds and transported from their family and friends to be an equitable and legal and charitable proceeding, unless I should say that it was a violation of Justice, and a dissolution, "pro tanto," of the very compact of human Society? If a House of Parliament whose Essence it is to be the Guardian of the Laws, and a Simpathetic protector of the rights of the people (and eminently so of the most defenceless) should not only countenance but applaud this very violation of all Law, and refuse even to examine into the Grounds of the

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necessity upon the allegation of which Law was so violated, would this be taken for a tender Solicitude for the welfare of the poor, and a true proof of the representative Capacity of the House of Commons, unless I should happen to say (what I do say) that the House had not done its duty either in preserving the sacred rules of Law or in justifying the woeful and humiliating privilege of necessity. They may indemnify and reward others. They might contrive, if I was within their grasp, to punish me, or if they thought it worth while to stigmatize me by their censures; but who will indemnify them for the disgrace of such an Act? Who will save them from the censures of Posterity? What act of Oblivion will cover them from the wakeful memory, from the Notices and issues of the Grand remembrancer, the God *within*? . . . . Shall you and I find fault with the proceedings of France, and be totally indifferent to the proceedings of Directories at home. You and I hate Jacobinism as we hate the Gates of Hell—Why? Because it is a System of oppression. What can make us in love with oppression because the Syllables Jacobin are not put before the *ism*. When the very same things are done under the *ism* preceded by any other Name in the Directory of Ireland.

I HAVE TOLD YOU, at a great length for a Letter, very shortly for the Subject and for my feelings on it, my sentiments of the scene in which you have been called to act,—on being consulted you advized Sufferers to quiet and submission; and giving Government full credit for an attention to its duties you held out, as an inducement to that submission, some sort of hope of redress. You tryed what your reasons and your credit could do to effect it. In consequence of this piece of service to Government you have been excluded from all communication with the Castle; and perhaps you may thank yourself that you are not in Newgate. You have done a little more than in your circumstances I should have done. You are indeed very excusable from your motive; but it is very dangerous to hold out to an irritated people Any hopes that we are not pretty sure of being able to realize. The Doctrine of Passive obedience, as a Doctrine, it is unquestionably right to teach; but to go beyond that, is a sort of deceit; and the people who are provoked by their Oppressors do not readily forgive their friends, if whilst the first persecutes and the others appear to deceive them. These friends lose all power of being serviceable to that Government in whose favor they have taken an illconsidered Step. Therefore my Opinion is, that untill the Castle shall shew a greater disposition to listen to its true friends than hitherto it has done, it would not be right in you any further to obtrude your services. In the mean time upon any new Application from the Catholics you ought to let them know simply and candidly how you stand.

. . . . and above all, I hope that you will use the whole of your influence among the Catholics to persuade them to a greater indifference about the Political Objects which at present they have in view. It is not but that I am aware of their importance; or wish them to be abandond. But that they would follow opportunities and not to attempt to force any thing. I doubt whether the priveleges they now seek or have lately sought are compassable. The Struggle would, I am afraid only lead to some of Those very disorders which are made pretexts for further Oppression of the oppressed. I wish the leading people amongst them would give the most Systematic attention to prevent a frequent communication with their adversaries. There are a part of them proud, insulting, capricious, and tyrannical. These of Course will keep them at a distance. There are others of a seditious Temper who would make them at first the instruments and in the End the Victims of their factious Temper and purposes. Those that steer a middle course are truly respectable but they are very few.

I KNOW VERY WELL, that such a discipline among so numerous a people is not easily introduced; but I am sure it is not impossible. If I had youth and strength, I would go myself over to Ireland to work.

. . . . The work will be very slow in its operation but it is certain in its effect. There is nothing which will not yield to perseverance and method. Adieu! My dear Sir—you have full liberty to shew this Letter to all those (and they are but very few) who may be disposed to think well of my Opinions.

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The Travels of St Paul and other the Apostles

To the Right Reverend
Father in God: SETH.
Lord Bishop of Salisbury.
Humbly dedicated:
Joseph Moxon.

From Italia
through Tyrene
to the shipwreck off Malta
(a scale of 80 English Leagues
  20 in a Degree):
a discharge of waves on the map
at the far right-hand side
above the Bishop's
floating mitre;
bubbling.

"This pricked track shows the voyage
  of Paul from Gerusalem to Rome":
hard to pick out from
mountains, snailish buildings, skinny
names; but Crete and Cyprus, Mare Maggiore
stand out well.

The Canaan Coast, on the right,
pickled with ports:
Arabia The Stony
pushing up tit heads of mountains
above The Red Sea:
beneath Des Arts of Arabia
"there is a happy land."

About the edge are etchings:
Paul Rejoyces at the death of Stephen,
letters to persecute the Christians are received,
He Is Converted:
taken up into the third Heaven:
finally,
        is brought to Rome before Nero
and put to death:
throughout the life and death
his face remains the same: healthy as
bacon, stern as a turd.

The picture dies:
whilst I have talked
a fly has made a journey
from Artennita, way of
                Scabina,
to the Caspian Sea.

David H. W. Grubb

Old Woman

Sitting rocking in a corner
Of the geriatric ward,
Baby-blue eyes making skull
And scrag-ends somehow beautiful,
She mutters that mother is
Still so strict at the
Top of all those steep stairs,
And she has to climb them
Polishing each step,
Always dogged by dirty
Footprints.

She strokes the fur smothering
Her knees—so smooth, so soft,
So free from fleas—
And notices suddenly
It is artificial.
It has always been free
From the animal dirt
She feels she must scrub
Within herself continually,
Wearing her poor mind thin.

Still she wears the fur outside in,
Warmth and silkiness next to the skin
—Still hoping in muddled gentleness
For a miracle:
A mother coming in kindness
Down those stairs, to free her
From her unintentional sin.

Elizabeth Maslen

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Executive

I am a young Executive. No cuffs than mine are cleaner.
I have a Slimline briefcase and I use the firm's Cortina.
The Winer's Club, the Diner's Club, AA and RAC
Are legitimate expenses, as I think you will agree.

In every roadside hostelry from here to Burgess Hill
The Maître d'Hôtel will know me well and let me sign the bill.
At Wilton's and the Hilton and the Westbury Hotel
The firm allows my meals account *and* bar account as well.

You ask me what it is I do. Well if you want to know,
I'm partly a liaison man and partly PRO.
Essentially I integrate the current export drive:
My office hours are *nominally* half-past-ten till five.

For basic viability—that's talking transport-wise—
I've a scarlet Aston Martin. And does she go! She *flies* . . . .
Pedestrians and dogs and cats—she marks them down for slaughter
I also own a speedboat (which has never seen the water):

She's built of fibre-glass, of course. I've called her "Mandy Jane",
After a bird I used to know—no soda, thanks, just plain—
And how did I acquire her? Well I'll tell you about that,
But to put you in the picture I must wear my other hat.

I do some mild developing. The sort of place I need
Is a quiet country market-town that's rather run to seed.
It's there I plant my agents—well, call them what you will—
To study the ecology of London's overspill.

John Betjeman

Buy One Now

This is a new sort of Poem,
It is Biological.
It contains a special Ingredient
(Pat. pend.) which makes it different
From other brands of poem on the market.

This new Poem does the work for you.
Just drop your mind into it
And leave it to soak
While you relax with the telly
Or go out to the pub
Or (if that is what you like)
You read a book.

It does the work for you
While (if that is what you like)
You sleep. For it is Biological
(Pat. pend.), it penetrates
Into the darkest recesses,
It removes the understains
Which it is difficult for us
Even to speak of.

Its action is so gentle that
The most delicate mind is unharmed.
This new sort of Poem
Contains an exclusive new Ingredient
(Known only to every jackass in the trade)
And can be found in practically any magazine
You care to mention.

D. J. Enright

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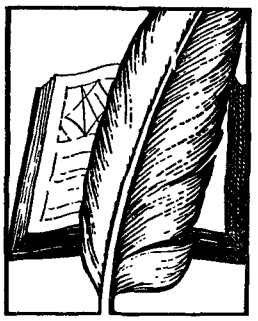

Column

THE RE-ELECTION of Mr Roy Jenkins last month as Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party was an odd affair, in which socialists once again revealed their strange propensity to hate each other more than their common political enemies. Mr Jenkins' majority was hardly a triumphant one; even so, it must have brought some comfort and relief to many life-long Labour supporters like myself, who took it as a sign that Labour had not quite succeeded in finally destroying any possibility of returning to power.

For the contest for the deputy-leadership was not merely a matter of Mr Jenkins' personal qualifications for that office, though these are indeed outstanding. They include, among other things, intellectual consistency, integrity of purpose, administrative ability, and, as we have had cause to see recently, great courage. There are not many of Labour's leaders at the present time who unite all these qualities to quite the same degree as Mr Jenkins and some indeed are almost totally lacking in all of them.

On the other hand, Mr Jenkins also has qualities which arouse suspicion and distaste in some members of his party. He is, for instance, a humane and civilised person of cultivated tastes, and certainly a worker by brain rather than hand, and this is quite enough to attract the dreadful charge of "élitism" from, say, such horny-handed sons of toil as Mr Wedgwood Benn or Mr R. H. S. Crossman. They, after all, have in youth suffered all the miseries and deprivations of a public school education and, in Mr Benn's case, bore the heavy burden of an inherited peerage, and it is natural that they should envy the privileges enjoyed by a miner's son like Mr Jenkins.

The effort to represent Mr Jenkins as a sophisticated and rootless intellectual, as opposed to those whose native instincts and affinities make their hearts automatically beat as one with the proletariat, provided one of the few entertaining aspects of the contest. Somehow they reminded one of Disraeli's attempt to put himself forward as the representative of the country gentlemen of England, and they had exactly the same elements of fantasy and play-acting—though not, alas! the wit or the panache—which enabled Disraeli to carry off the imposture with success. But this, after all, was only one of the side- or raree-shows of the contest, and amusing though it was, it did not really affect the issue which was at stake.

NOR WAS THAT ISSUE, as it may have appeared to be, a deep-seated divergence of principle on the subject of the Common Market. It is true that Mr Jenkins does have deep feelings and convictions on the subject, consistently maintained and proclaimed over a long period of years. But how could principle be involved in the case of people whose beliefs and opinions in this matter have simply been a function of whether they were in, or out, of office? One could hardly help suspecting that the anger of some of Mr Jenkins' opponents was largely due to his effrontery in daring to have principles when they could not afford to. After all, what could be more "élitist" than having principles? It's as bad as liking claret.

In this respect, however, it would perhaps be true to say that Mr Jenkins' opponents represented the feelings of the rank and file of the Labour Party rather more faithfully than he did. The great majority of the Labour Party does not have, and never has had, any profound convictions about the Market, and in this respect they do not differ from the great mass of people in the country as a whole. They regard it, rightly or wrongly, as a matter outside the sphere of their interest or their comprehension. Its economic complexities baffle and bore them; its long term implications escape them, and they regard them as a kind of pie-in-the-sky which has little to do with their immediate necessities. When their leaders, in office, told them that it was a good thing for Britain to enter the Market, they believed them, because they trusted them. When the same leaders, out of office, told them it was a bad thing, they believed them again. Only by this time bewilderment had been added to boredom. With the best will in the world, it is not easy to support two incompatible policies within the short space of eighteen months without feeling slightly dizzy, though this kind of thing offers no difficulties to trapeze artists like Mr Benn or Mr Healey.

It is of course true that the trade unions, or at least their leaders, do have, and always

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have had, strong objections to the Market. They fear, and perhaps from their own point of view their fears are justified, that entry into the European Economic Community will weaken the near-monopoly position in the labour market, and relax the stranglehold which they have established on industry in this country. And on the other hand, they have no sympathy whatever with such naïve and old-fashioned ideas as that socialism is by its very nature an international movement and that Britain's entry into the E.E.C. will strengthen the European working class as a whole. For the trade union leaders are not socialists in any sense whatever, however much they may pretend to be; they are what Kafka once described as "the war profiteers of the class struggle", hard-faced men who have done well out of the class war. In their devotion to socialism in one country, they are as Stalinist as Stalin ever was, and it is not surprising that the Social Democratic parties of Europe should have been shocked and repelled by the spirit of insularity and chauvinism which, under their influence, the British Labour Party has recently displayed.

FORTUNATELY, the trade unions are not and never have been the Labour Party, even though they may pay for it and form a very important part of it. But until now they have never formed the predominant element in it. If they had, it is likely that there would never have been a Labour government in this country, and if they were now able to do so, it is likely that there will never be another Labour government again.

Even the most ardent trade unionist feels a certain qualm at the idea of a government which was at the mercy of Mr Jack Jones or Mr Hugh Scanlon; as for the great majority of Labour supporters, much less that amorphous body of floating voters who, in the last resort, are the only people who can put a Labour government into power, it positively scares them out of their wits. After all, they only have to look at the way the unions manage their own affairs to find an image of precisely how the affairs of the country, or the Labour Party, or for that matter any institution which purports to be democratic, should not be managed. As for what the actual content of their policies is, one has only to listen to Mr Scanlon or Mr Jones, or an even more skilled practitioner, Mr Vic Feather, to realise that they have brought the art of Newspeak to a hitherto unparalleled pitch of perfection.

THE REAL ISSUE which lay behind the contest for the Deputy-Leadership was what kind of party the Labour Party is or is going to become. In this sense one could say that it really was, in a dim and confused way, a battle for the soul of the Party. It was the contention of Mr Jenkins' opponents that, whatever the merits of his convictions about the Market, he was out of tune with, as they say, "the movement", and he should therefore retire gracefully to the back benches until, like Mr Wilson, Mr Callaghan, Mr Healey *et al.*, he had learned the gentle art of how to change your mind when you think it suits you to.

In making this demand, Mr Jenkins' opponents were, some consciously, some unconsciously, demanding what amounts to a revolution in the Labour Party; that is to say, that its representatives in Parliament should be responsible, not to the 12,000,000 or so of voters to whom they owe their Parliamentary seats, but to the Labour Party conference, whose decisions are (in the absence of any countervailing force) dependent upon a wholly artificial and unrepresentative constitution which gives the trade unions a built-in majority. Perhaps this is what Mr Wedgwood Benn means when he tells us of the terrible things he will do unless Mr Jenkins and his supporters learn to change their ways. I do not know if Mr Benn has Welsh blood in his veins but sometimes he reminds one of the vainglorious Glendower: *I can call spirits from the vasty deep.* But will they come? One finds it difficult to believe that any serious political movement can pay attention to what Mr Benn says. Yet there might be something in his threats. For to say that the Parliamentary Party should be bound by the decisions of the Party conference is to put forward a doctrine that has never hitherto been accepted by the Labour movement, either in power or out of power, and which, if accepted, would make of it something it had never been in the past.

THE REASONING, if one may call it that, which lies behind the new doctrine is that the Party conference is in some way or other more representative of the Labour movement as a whole, is closer to its roots in town and in country, than the Parliamentary Party; and that, this being so, it follows that the Parliamentary Party should obey the wishes of the conference rather than of the constituents from whom it has solicited votes. For some reason or other Mr Benn thinks that this would introduce a greater measure of "democracy", or to use a word which he seems to

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think its equivalent, of "participation" into the party; but then, one rather has the feeling that in Mr Benn's mouth either "democracy" or "participation" are simply noises which can be made to mean anything which Mr Benn chooses to make them mean at any particular moment.

THE TRUTH IS, of course, that if the Parliamentary Labour Party were to subject itself to the decisions of the conference, which in fact are the decisions of the trade unions, it would be betraying the hopes and aspirations of millions of people whose votes are essential if it is ever to achieve power again. For the Labour Party is not composed exclusively of trade unionists or of the active and militant party workers whose votes are exercised at the conference, any more than the Conservative Party consists of the ladies in large hats who put their particular stamp upon the Conservative Party conference. It includes millions of people of every class and walk in life, embracing a wide and often conflicting variety of opinions, who by no means regard the decisions of the conference as binding upon themselves or the Labour members to whom they give their votes; if they did, they would, quite simply, not vote for them. And it is only since the Labour Party, under the leadership of men like Attlee and Gaitskell, has proved itself capable of winning their confidence, partly for personal and partly for political reasons, that it has been rescued from the position of a permanent minority party to which it was condemned throughout the disastrous period of the 1930s.

The Labour Party is by its very nature a coalition of the most heterogeneous collection of forces, some of which have a deeper root in the history of the country than the Party itself. This is both its weakness and its strength; it is also the basis of its claim to be more representative of the country as a whole than any party which is based exclusively on class interests. But such a coalition cannot be adequately represented by a conference which, owing to the wholly artificial character of its constitution, gives an exaggerated weight to the influence of the unions, that is to say, to a sectional interest both in the country and the Party. Indeed, unless the Parliamentary Party can maintain, as it always has maintained in the past, a freedom of action which allows it, while giving proper attention to conference decisions, to draw up its own legislative programme and decide its own parliamentary and electoral strategy and tactics, the coalition is at all times likely to fall apart, and in the conflict over the Common Market, has shown every sign of being about to do so. It is indeed still not certain whether it can continue to hold together.

IT IS PRECISELY the importance of Mr Jenkins that he represents all those elements in the Labour Party whose views are not adequately reflected by the Party conference; and in insisting on a false conception of Party unity based exclusively on conference decisions, his opponents are really calling for a split which would divide the Party to its foundations. This is all the more deplorable because the question of the Common Market, which has given rise to that demand, is already becoming an irrelevance. Whatever difficulties the present government may experience in passing the enabling legislation demanded by the Treaty of Rome, in a year's time Britain's entry into the market is likely to have become a *fait accompli*, a fact of life to which everyone will have to accommodate himself. What will decide the future of the government is not the Market, but such matters as Ulster, education, housing, most of all unemployment and the success or failure of its overall economic and financial policies. On such matters, the Government is increasingly vulnerable and on all of them the Labour Party is, or should be, capable of offering effective opposition and criticism, which would provide the basis for an alternative government.

The Labour Party would not easily be forgiven by its supporters in the country if, at a time when such matters were at issue, it were to waste its efforts on internecine strife and on protracted and sterile opposition to the details of the government's enabling legislation, and nothing could add more to their present disillusionment than the prospect of weary and exhausted M.P.s being nightly whipped through the lobbies to vote against measures which have not the slightest relevance to the problems with which the country is immediately faced. The leaders of the Labour Party should realise that many of them have become laughing-stocks even to their own supporters. It will not be easy for them to recover the position of strength from which they set out to govern the country five years ago. They have a long record of errors and blunders, and of spectacular political somersaults, to make good. They certainly will not do so if their efforts are primarily devoted to muzzling Mr Jenkins and reducing to silence those who think that there is more important work to do.

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The Study of Islam

By Bernard Lewis

DURING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY the forms, language, and to some extent even the structures of public life in the Muslim countries were given a Western and therefore a secular appearance. In those countries which were under European domination, the process was slow, cautious, and incomplete; in those where Muslim rulers retained political independence, they were able to impose Westernising reforms with greater ruthlessness and fewer fears or inhibitions. By nationalising the *waqf* revenues and introducing modern—*i.e.* Western-style—law and education, they simultaneously deprived the *ulema* both of their financial independence and of a large part of their functions and influence, and reduced them in effect to a branch of the bureaucracy. The men of the faith now became servants and spokesmen of the state, who successively justified reform, reaction, liberalism and socialism, from the same texts and by the same methods of exegesis.

The state itself, struggling for survival in a world dominated by the European powers, adopted European forms and procedures, and drew increasingly, in the recruitment and promotion of its personnel, on those whose education and aptitudes enabled them to meet the needs of this situation—that is to say, on the minority who knew a Western language, had at least a tincture of Western education, and had therefore acquired some Western habits of behaviour and perhaps of thought. From this time onwards, identity is defined and loyalty claimed on national rather than communal lines; criticism and aspiration are formulated in secular, not religious terms. New books replace the sacred and classical texts as the pabulum of the literate and governing élite; journalists, lawyers and professors take over from the *ulema*; not theology, but politics provides the basis of argument and the form of expression.

The exponents of Islam have always been of two very different kinds, sometimes in conflict, usually interacting. On the one hand there were the *ulema*, the upholders of orthodoxy and authority, of dogma and of law; on the other the dervishes and their equivalents, preserving a tradition—or rather many local traditions—of popular religion and religiosity. Both groups have a habit of submission to political authority: the *ulema* of active support, the dervishes of passive if critical acquiescence —though the latter were often treated with mistrust by governments, because of the powerful pent-up emotions and energies which they could control or release.

The Westernising reforms affected both groups adversely. The *ulema*, already to some extent associated with political power, now became completely subservient to it, and lost touch with the people. The dervishes, together with the masses to whom they belonged, were separated by a widening gulf from the Westernised political and intellectual élites, who no longer shared the same universe of discourse or even wore the same clothes as the un-Westernised majority. *Ulema* and dervishes alike were out of touch with the modern world, against which the new élites were struggling, and which at the same time they were striving to join.

In this new world, theology was seen as old-fashioned and irrelevant; dervish mysticism as a shameful and dangerous superstition. The only hope of salvation was economic, social, and above all political reform, conceived and, as it were, applied in accordance with a succession of imported European ideologies.

IN THE LAST HUNDRED YEARS Europe and, later, North America have seen the Islamic world through a distorting glass of European and, later, North American categories and terminologies. Muslims, for reasons of fashion, prestige, or perhaps even conviction, frequently describe the affairs of their countries in these Western terms. Western observers—journalists, politicians, scholars—

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gratefully accept these terms, for their own convenience and that of their readers. This has led to the curious but widespread belief that the authentic and significant forces in the Muslim world can be adequately denoted and classified by such parochial Western terms as nationalist and socialist, progressive and revolutionary—even, the ultimate absurdity, right-wing and left-wing. The results are about as informative as an account of a cricket match written by a baseball correspondent.

From time to time some incident, perhaps trivial in itself, allows a glimpse of the hard realities under the verbiage. On 25 April 1967 the Syrian army magazine *Jaysh al-Sha'b* (The people's army) published an article by one Second Lieutenant Ibrahim Khalas, entitled "THE MEANS OF CREATING A NEW ARAB MAN". The only way to build Arab society and civilisation, the author argued, was to create

> a new Arab socialist man, who believes that God, religions, feudalism, capital, and all the values which prevailed in the pre-existing society were no more than stuffed puppets in the museums of history. . . . There is only one value: absolute faith in the new man of destiny . . . who relies only on himself and on his own contribution to humanity . . . because he knows that his inescapable end is death and nothing beyond death . . . no heaven and no hell . . . We have no need of men who kneel and beg for grace and pity. . . .

This was the first time that such sentiments had appeared in print in any of the revolutionary Arab states.

The result was electrifying. The Syrian population seemed thoroughly cowed, and had already passively acquiesced in a whole series of radical political and economic changes. The suppression of free speech, the control of movement, the confiscation of property all passed without incident—but an attack on God and religion in an officially sponsored publication revealed the limits of acquiescence, the final values for which a Muslim people was willing to stand up and resist.

In the face of mounting tension and hostility, the government beat a retreat. On 5 May the author of the article and the editor of the journal were arrested. The following day the semi-official newspaper *al-Thawra* (the Revolution) proclaimed its respect for religion, and shortly afterwards it was announced that the article was planted by the C.I.A., and the resistance concerted with "the Americans, the English, the Jordanians, the Saudis, the Zionists, and Selim Hatum." The troubles continued, and on 11 May the author and editor were both sentenced by a military court to hard labour for life. Thereafter the problem was appositely overshadowed by a new crisis between Syria and Israel, which in due course led to the Six Day War.

There have been other occasions too—the passionate outburst of prayer and anathema after the Mosul massacres of March 1959,[1] the immediate response to the fire in the al-Aqsa mosque in August 1969, the recurrent clashes in India and Indonesia—which suggest that Islam is still the most powerful rallying-cry, and that it is for Islam, more than for any other cause, that men are still willing to kill and be killed—provided of course they are convinced that Islam, as they understand it, is really under attack, and not merely exploited, as so often, for political ends.

THIS IS THE CRUX. The response to the al-Aqsa affair illustrates perfectly both the power and the limitations of Islam as a political factor. The anger of the Muslim masses at what they at first saw as a threat to the faith was strong and real—but the attempt to use that anger for political ends failed utterly. One reason for this failure was the patent insincerity of the attempt. The revolutionary Arab leaders made no secret of their desire to subordinate Islamic to Arab purposes; the conservative potentates were visibly more concerned about the oil in

[1] See for example the prayer recited in Egyptian mosques and published on the front pages of the Egyptian papers on 17 March 1959:

"God is great! God is great! There is no might and no power save in God! May He strengthen the martyrs with His grace and ordain them everlasting life in His mercy and abase their enemies in shame and ignominy! God is great! God is great! There is no victory save in God! Whoever offends, God will crush him; whoever exalts himself by wrongdoing, God will humble him! Consider not those who are killed in the cause of God as dead, but as living, with their Lord who sustains them.

"O God Almighty, All-powerful! Conquer Thine enemy with Thine omnipotence so that he returns to Thee! O God, Almighty, All-powerful, strengthen the community of Thy Prophet with Thy favour, and ordain defeat for their enemy! O God, O Lord of the Qur'an, give victory to Thy Qur'an as Thou gavest victory to 'Abd al-Muttalib on the Day of the Elephant, when Thou didst send against them flights of birds who pelted them with clay stones, so that they became like consumed chaff [Qur'an 105]! In faith we worship Thee, in sincerity we call upon Thee, the blood of our martyrs we entrust to Thee, O merciful and compassionate One, Who answers the prayers of him who prays—our innocent martyrs and pure victims for the sake of Thy religion. For the glory of Thy religion they shed their blood and died as martyrs; believing in Thee, they greeted the day of sacrifice blissfully. Therefore place them, O God, as companions with the upright and the martyrs and the righteous—how good these are as companions! [Qur'an, 4, 69]."

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Alaska than about the fire in al-Aqsa. Another reason no doubt was the gradual realisation of the basic triviality of the incident—especially when contrasted with the unambiguous communal carnage in India at the same time.

ISLAM CAN NO LONGER be harnessed, yet it remains a force—even when it ceases to command belief. As W. Cantwell Smith remarked of modernist Muslim intellectuals—they revere "Islam in history along with, or even instead of, God. . . ."[2]

It is curious that only two Muslim states, Turkey and Tunisia, have legally abolished polygamy. Neither would rank as "progressive" by the currently fashionable definition of the term—though both would qualify in an earlier, more conventionally liberal meaning of progress. The same cannot be said of the revolutionary states, which are intellectually and socially far more conservative, and have in recent years become more, not less, self-consciously Islamic, both in their deference to their own religion, and in their treatment of others. The lesson of April 1967 was well learnt. During the last three years, more mosques have been built in Syria than in the previous thirty, while a Christian Arab writer describes the feelings of the growing number of Christian emigrants in these terms:

> Christians [they say] have no future in a country which is becoming all the time more socialist and totalitarian. Their children are indoctrinated in the schools, where the syllabus is devoted more and more to Islam and their faith is in danger. Debarred increasingly from public office and from nationalised societies [sic], robbed of the property of their parents and unable to engage in profitable business in a society where almost everything is under state control, how can they survive?[3]

Even when Muslims cease to believe in Islam, they may retain Islamic habits and attitudes. Thus, among Muslim Marxists, there are both *ulema* and dervishes, defending the creed and proclaiming the (revolutionary) holy war against the (imperialist) infidel. At the moment, the *ulema* of Marxism incline towards Moscow, the dervishes towards Peking or Havana. *"There is no God and Mao is His Prophet!"* Even when the faith dies, loyalty survives. Even when loyalty fades, the old identity, and with it a complex of old attitudes and desires, remain, as the only reality under the superficial, artificial covering of new values and ideologies. For those who would understand the ways of Muslim peoples, some study of Islam, both formal and popular, is a necessity. It is important to observe Islam; and indeed Christendom, the closest neighbour and greatest rival of Islam, has been observing it for a long time.

IT HAS NOT GENERALLY BEEN the habit, in the past, for civilisations and religions to attempt a sympathetic study of their neighbours and rivals. Civilisation meant our civilisation, and the rest were barbarians. Religion meant our religion, and the rest were infidels. Occasionally an author like Herodotus in ancient Greece or Rashíd al-Dín in mediaeval Persia was moved by curiosity or other causes to attempt the study of remote peoples and alien cultures. They remained exceptions and found few if any imitators. The first civilisation known to history which seriously undertook the study of others not in order to conquer or convert them but merely in order to know about them, is that of Western Europe. Its example has now spread to other parts of the world.

The observation of Islam from Christendom has been going on for many centuries. Though often marred by prejudice and interest, it has nevertheless produced an understanding which is far deeper, knowledge far more extensive and more accurate, than the corresponding and simultaneous observation of Christendom from Islam.

To mediaeval Europe, Islam was the great adversary, and its study was required for good practical reasons. One was polemic—to understand the rival faith in order to refute and destroy it. Another was to learn. There were men in Europe who, though good Christians, recognised that the Muslims in Spain and the East knew more than they did of science, medicine, and philosophy. They were anxious to learn from them, and some even learnt Arabic for this purpose.

Religious polemic against Islam was frequent in the Middle Ages, especially during the struggles in Spain and in the Levant, and many tracts were written, either to protect Christians from Muslim blandishments, or to convert Muslims to Christianity. This literature died out when the one task was seen as unnecessary, the other as impossible. There was a brief revival during the period of the great Ottoman conquests, but broadly speaking, after the end of the Middle Ages, Islam

[2] W. Cantwell Smith, *Islam in Modern History* (1957), p. 151.
[3] In *Religion in the Middle East* (ed. A. J. Arberry, 1969), I, p. 415.

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was no longer regarded in Christian Europe as a serious intellectual rival. This is the more notable, in that this attitude continued even at the time when the great challenge of Ottoman military power constituted a major threat to Europe, and Ottoman social policies offered a dangerous attraction to European peasants.

Anti-Islamic polemic continued in a desultory sort of way in missionary and theological circles, but is of no great importance except in so far as it affects and distorts the growth of scholarship in the West. To a remarkable extent theology has remained the starting point of those who undertake the academic study of oriental civilisations and religions. Though most—not all—are free from the prejudices and purposes of earlier days, these studies have not yet been entirely emancipated from their theological origins. The prejudices of the mediaeval schoolmen may still at times be detected lurking behind the serrated footnotes of the academic apparatus.

BROADLY SPEAKING, HOWEVER, Western theologians, even missionaries, working on Islam no longer have it as their purpose—at least as their direct purpose—to convert Muslims to Christianity. Their approach to Islam has rather been in the spirit of the Dutch poet and scholar Willem Bilderdijk (1756-1831), who argued that "Mohammedans must be brought to Christ through the Koran", by showing them that "Mohammed was a Christian at heart . . . a tool in the hands of a benevolent Providence, and pioneer of salvation to Pagans and Manicheans."[4] Similar views were expressed by the English missionary Charles Forster, who in his *Mahometanism Unveiled* (1829) saw Islam as a "half way house"—a "middle term" between Christianity and paganism. "It is only by fairly acknowledging what they have" says Forster, "that we can hope to make them sensible of what they have not."[5] With the direct attack now generally abandoned as impracticable if not unnecessary, missionary interest takes other forms—sometimes in the guise of oecumenism, sometimes clothed in the desire to join forces against a common enemy, variously defined.

[4] Letter to Isaac da Costa, 11 February 1823, in *Brieven van Mr. Willem Bilderdijk*, IV (Rotterdam, 1837), pp. 75-6; cited by C. F. Pijper, *Islam and the Netherlands* (Leiden, 1957), p. 16.

[5] Charles Forster, *Mahometanism Unveiled* (1829), II, pp. 365, 378. Cf. N. Daniel, *Islam, Europe and Empire*, (1966), p. 33; Albert Hourani, "Islam and the Philosophers of History", in *Middle Eastern Studies* (1967), III, pp. 223-5.

The earlier type of study of Islam for purposes of polemic and refutation reappears in the twentieth century only in one place—in the Soviet Union. In the early days after the Revolution, Russian scholarship on the Islamic lands was dominated by the need to refute and undermine Islamic and nationalist movements in the Muslim territories of the former Russian Empire, and to destroy Islam in order to prepare and facilitate the conversion of the Muslim peoples of the Union to communism. The anti-Islamic literature produced in Moscow in the 1920s and early '30s in many ways closely resembles that emanating from the monasteries of mediaeval Western Europe. Their interpretation of Islam, based on *a priori* theoretical principles and directed to practical purposes, belongs to the literature of religious polemic rather than of scholarship. Much Marxist writing on Islam is similarly determined, though that which is produced outside the Soviet Union usually shows greater intellectual sophistication and less obvious polemical aims. In Muslim countries, no doubt for tactical reasons, Marxists often adapt, *mutatis mutandis*, a sort of Bilderdijk approach, presenting Muhammad as a socialist at heart, a tool in the hands of the inexorable laws of history, and a potential pioneer of communism to Muslims. This approach has so far won little support, except among the official ideologues of the régimes.

Apart from the work of a few scholarly broad-church Western Marxists, the literature of polemic, whether Marxist or Christian, shows little sign of intellectual curiosity or detachment—a quality which was indeed regarded, by the one as a sin, by the other as an ideological error.

IN THE WEST, the polemicist was succeeded by a new figure, who came to be known by the odd term "orientalist." This word designates, with extreme vagueness, the object of the scholar's studies, but gives no indication of his method or purpose. Usually, his disciplines were theology and philology, his motive scientific curiosity—though the opportunities to indulge his curiosity were often the result of political and economic needs.

The new phase began with the Renaissance, amid a uniquely favourable combination of circumstances. The classical revival and the voyages of exploration both contributed greatly to the growth of orientalist scholarship. The old authors, and especially Herodotus, provided the model for the study of remote and alien peoples; the new scholarship furnished the

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philological method that was required for such studies; the expansion of Europe provided at once the scope, the need, and the material.

While Europe was expanding at both ends, across the steppes and the oceans, Islam, now represented by the Ottoman Empire, was advancing through the Balkans towards Vienna. For a while, Turkey seemed to offer a major threat to the survival of Christian civilisation—but at the same time her vast territories offered a great opportunity for European commercial enterprise. Both as enemy and as market, she was an important field of study.

Finally, the Reformation and Counter-Reformation injected a new religious concern into European affairs. Protestants and especially Unitarians showed for a while an interest in Islam—in this faith which, by its hostility to polytheism and images, seemed to offer some affinities with the Protestant challenge to Catholicism. Added to this was the tempting possibility of a Turkish alliance against the Catholic powers. Though all this came to nothing, it nevertheless left some effects on the growth of European scholarship.

European writing on Islam from the 16th century onwards is of two main kinds, with two very different approaches.

1. The first of these is what one might call the scholarly, dominated by theology and philology, concerned primarily with the scriptures and with the classics of Islam. The Koran and the ancient Arabian literature were studied in the same way and by the same techniques as the Bible and the classics of Greece and Rome had been studied in Europe. The greatest attention was devoted to Arabic, somewhat less to Persian. Characteristically, hardly any attention at all was given to Turkish which, though it was the major language of the Muslim world at that time, had the disadvantage of being a living language, and therefore, like English, French and German, unworthy of serious scholarly attention.

2. A second group of writings was practical, concerned with the news from Turkey and, to a lesser extent, other Muslim countries. Many books were produced on the subject of the Turkish Empire, its resources, its population, its military strength, and of course, among other things, its religion, including the different forms of worship, of organisation, and of belief which existed among the peoples of that Empire. This literature is based in the main on direct observation, and is intended to satisfy the need for accurate practical information about this dangerous yet interesting neighbour of Christendom. It may be noted that this neighbour was still seen primarily in religious rather than national terms, and that even such ethnic names as "Turk" and "Moor" were commonly used in a religious sense, as synonyms for Muslim. Eastern Christians were not normally called by either name, while a European who adopted Islam was said to have "turned Turk."

DURING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY European scholarship on Islam received a tremendous new impetus. Several new developments contributed to this great growth. One of these was the application to Islamic studies of the critical historical method which was being developed by European and especially German scholars for the study of Greek, Roman, and European history. The use of these methods for the study of the early history of Islam, the life of the Prophet, the foundation of the Caliphate, the great Arab conquests and the like, carried these studies a major step forward and formed the basis for most subsequent writing, in the Islamic world as well as in Europe.

A second important development was the emancipation of the European Jews, and the consequent entry of Jewish scholars into the European Universities. From the first, Jewish scholars made a major contribution to the development of Arabic and Islamic studies—a contribution which still continues to the present day, as far as politically-minded administrators and benefactors permit. Like their Christian colleagues, most of them had a theological background, transferring from the rabbinical schools and seminaries where they had studied Hebrew and Talmud, to the study of Arabic and of Islam. They differed however in several important respects from their Christian colleagues. The Jewish scholar, unlike many of his Christian colleagues, had no missionary ambitions, no nostalgia for the Crusades, no concern with the Eastern question. He was free from the inherited fears, prejudices, and inhibitions that had often marred Christian scholarship.

On the contrary, in two important respects he was favourably inclined to the object of his studies. One of these was practical and real. Hebrew and Arabic are cognate languages; Judaism and Islam are sister religions, with many important resemblances between them. A Hebraist could learn Arabic, a Talmudist understand the holy law of Islam, with greater ease and also with greater sympathy than could his Protestant or Catholic colleagues.

There was in addition a further reason for Jewish sympathy with Islam. This was the period when old-fashioned religious anti-Judaism in Christendom was giving way to the

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new racially expressed anti-Semitism, and the Jew was being attacked no longer as an unbeliever (a charge unworthy of the enlightened nineteenth century) but as a racial inferior, an Asian alien in Europe. Told that he was a Semite or an Oriental, he looked to other Semites and other Orientals for comfort—rather as the American black looks to Africa and even Asia at the present time, with about as much justification in either case. Though this affinity was largely imaginary and entirely unreciprocated, it was nevertheless an important factor in arousing Jewish sympathy for Islam and interest in Islamic studies. Jewish scholars were among the first who attempted to present Islam to European readers as the Muslims themselves see it, and to stress, to recognise and indeed sometimes romanticise the merits and achievements of Muslim civilisation in its great days.

THE MAJOR DEVELOPMENT of the 19th century which affected the growth of Oriental studies was of course the rise of Imperialism and the consolidation of European power over the greater part of the Muslim world. The main countries concerned were Britain, ruling India and, later, parts of the Middle East and of Africa; France, in North and, later, Western and Central Africa; Holland, which came to dominate the greater part of Muslim South East Asia; and Russia, which conquered the Muslim peoples of the Volga, the Crimea, the Caucasus, and the old Muslim Kingdoms of Central Asia. These were the four major imperial powers which divided the world of Islam between them. In addition, Germany and Austria developed a semi-colonial relationship with the Ottoman Empire; and later Italy, for a brief but important interval, ruled over parts of North and East Africa.

The charge is often brought, by orientals against orientalists, that they are the servants of imperialism, and that their work is designed to serve the needs of the administrator, the trader, the diplomat, the agent and the missionary. The charge is not entirely without foundation, and finds added support in the occasional appearances of the orientalist in person in one or other of these roles. In the only surviving European empire ruling over Islamic lands, that of Russia, scholarship is unmistakably—indeed avowedly—harnessed to the policies and purposes of the state.

Yet, as an assessment of the motives that impelled Western man, even till now almost alone among mankind, to undertake the study of alien civilisations, this charge is ludicrously inadequate. Empire and commerce may have provided the stimulus and also the opportunity to undertake such studies; they did not, in free societies, direct them. The missionary and the colonial expert have, on the whole, played only a minor part in the development of Islamic scholarship in the West, and their work, with very few exceptions, has won scant respect and enjoyed little influence among scholars. The major advances were the work of men whose driving force was the desire to know and to understand, and whose methods were those of critical scholarship. Most of them were university teachers, independent of, and sometimes opposed to, the great imperial and commercial interests.

THE FIRST OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES to give attention to Islam was history. Practical men wrote or sponsored histories of Ottoman Turkey, the last surviving Muslim great power; scholars examined the origins and early history of the Islamic faith and community. The former produced work which is now of interest only in so far as it is contemporary and first-hand; the latter laid the foundations of a great—and continuing—scholarly tradition.

It has been said that the history of the Arabs has been written in the West chiefly by historians who know no Arabic and by Arabists who know no history. If we add Persian, Turkish, and some other languages to the formula, it may be extended to cover the history of Islam as a whole. Even now it must be admitted, at whatever cost in professional self-esteem, that the standard of entry and performance in Middle Eastern studies is recognisably lower than in other, more frequented disciplines. Nevertheless there has been progress; and during the past century-and-a-half a series of scholars who were both historians and orientalists have added substantially to our understanding of the history of Islam—and not only to our understanding, but also to that of the Muslims themselves.

EVEN WHEN WRITING OF THE PAST, historians are the captives of their own times—in their materials and their methods, their concepts and their concerns. Historians of classical Islam could not but be influenced by the contemporary Islam which they saw, and particularly therefore by that part of the Islamic world to which circumstances, personal or national, gave them access. British, French, Russian, or German Islamicists therefore tended to see Islam in an Indian, North African, Central Asian, or late Ottoman guise. The

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historian is also guided, in the questions he asks and the answers he finds, by the preoccupations of his own time and milieu. Edward Pococke, the first great English Arabist, working at Oxford during the Civil War, hinted at parallels, in the Caliphate of al-Ma'mūn, to the clash of forces and doctrines that he saw around him; 19th-century European scholars discerned currents of liberalism and nationalism in the religious and sectarian struggles of early Islam; 20th-century scholars, looking in the mirror of history, found economic change and social conflict—and turned to the new techniques and concepts of the social scientists for help in understanding them.

The first European observers to make significant generalisations about Islamic society were—not surprisingly—travellers. Certainly the most influential of these was François Bernier (1620-1688), a French physician and natural historian who spent twelve years in India and shorter periods in Syria and Egypt. As well as describing Islamic society, Bernier tried to analyse the causes of its relative poverty and backwardness in the arts, sciences, and agriculture. He found the explanation in the lack of private landed property and the seizure of the land by the ruler, which led, directly or indirectly, to a stagnant society and a despotic régime.[6] Bernier's ideas influenced many later writers, notably Montesquieu; they were also adopted by Karl Marx, and thus place him, with Adam Smith and the English Utilitarians, among the ancestors of the Marxist doctrine of the "Asiatic mode of production."

Another philosophical Frenchman, the famous Volney (1757-1820), spent three years in Egypt and Syria. Unlike so many travellers, he tells us nothing of his own journeys and adventures. Instead, he describes, systematically and in detail, the condition of the countries which he visited, and examines the causes of what he describes. It is a sombre picture that he paints—of poverty and fear, ignorance and backwardness, tyranny, brigandage and insecurity, and a general listlessness broken only by sudden fits of pointless violence. Volney rejects the theory, current in his day, that these evils are due to climate and its effect on character. The true cause, he argues, lies in social institutions—in government and religion, the despotic misrule of the one sustained by the quietist teaching of the other. Volney, writing again after the French Revolution, was optimistic, believing that what despotism had marred, liberty could mend. Social backwardness was a temporary setback on the march of progress, which change and reform would overcome.[7]

HALF A CENTURY LATER Adolphus Slade (1804-1877), a British naval officer who was in Turkey during the great reforms of Sultan Mahmud II and his successors, took a different view. His books have not received the attention they deserve—partly no doubt because of their form as old-fashioned personal narratives, perhaps more because their findings clashed with the liberal orthodoxy of the time. Unlike most European observers, Slade was convinced neither of the iniquities of the old régime, nor of the advantages of the new. A critical but sympathetic observer, he was aware of the defects of the old order, yet found much in it to admire; while seeing the need for some change he condemns the indiscriminate haste with which it was enforced, and shows how liberal reform, by disrupting a traditional society, may lead to a loss of liberty. The old nobility, however ineffectual, had generosity, honour, and a certain grace; the new nobility, thrown up by the reforms, was greedy, violent and corrupt. "The old nobility, profuse and open-handed, lived on their estates: their ovens were never cool; their pilaf cauldrons never empty. The State was the estate of the new nobility."[8] These judgments, with others of similar prescience, range Slade with Burke and Tocqueville as a conservative prophet of radical doom.

These—two French philosophers and an English sailor—are but three, among the best, of the many travellers who returned from the East to enlighten their compatriots about Islam. Their writings helped, even more than those of the historians, to form and shape the image of Islam and Islamic civilisation, as reflected in Western thought and scholarship.

FROM THE 18TH CENTURY ONwards most of the great political and social thinkers have something to say about the nearest neighbour of Christendom. In France,

[6] François Bernier, *Histoire de la dernière révolution des états du Grand Mogol* (4 vols., Paris, 1670-71). There are numerous later editions and translations of Bernier's travels, correspondence, and other writings. A revised English translation of the travels was edited by V. A. Smith (Oxford, 1914).

[7] Volney, *Voyage en Egypte et en Syrie* (1787; English tr. 1787); ed. Jean Gaulmier, Paris & the Hague, 1959; *Les Ruines, ou Méditations sur les révolutions des Empires* (Paris, 1791).

[8] A. Slade, *Turkey and the Crimean War* (London, 1867), pp. 31-2. *Cf.* B. Lewis, "Some English Travellers in the East", in *Middle Eastern Studies* (1968), IV, pp. 303 ff.

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Montesquieu and Voltaire spoke of ideas and institutions; in Germany, Herder and Hegel discussed the deeper philosophical implications; in England, Burke considered the legal and political character of Muslim government as it affected the case of Warren Hastings, while Adam Smith, Richard Jones, and the elder and younger Mill commented on the economic and social structures of the Muslim Empires. At some distance after these came Spengler, Toynbee, and other exponents of metahistory, as it is now called, though catahistory might be a better designation for their endeavours.

In this connection one other group of writings may be mentioned in passing, though it has only minor relevance to the subject under discussion. In the literature of self-doubt and self-chastisement[9] which has become an essential part of the Western tradition, the Muslim —like other non-Westerners—is often used as a sort of lay figure, or rather a ventriloquist's dummy, with an assigned part to speak in a purely Western dialogue. All this has nothing to do with either Islam or scholarship, and contributes about as much to our understanding of Islam as *Gulliver's Travels* or the *Lettres Persanes* to our knowledge of cartography or Persia—and far less to our edification.

SEVERAL OF THE FOUNDERS of modern social science had something to say about Islam. For Auguste Comte, Islam, like Christianity, was medieval and superseded, and was doomed to make way for the new religion of scientific positivism; he followed the Ottoman reforms with sympathetic interest, and had some impact on the Young Turks of the next generation, whose slogan "Union and Progress" was an adaptation of Comte's "Order and Progress." Max Weber died before he could add Islam to the other religions which he examined in detail, but his works contain numerous indications of his thinking on Islam, much influenced by the writings of Julius Wellhausen. Karl Marx, like other Victorians, saw the Ottoman Empire chiefly in terms of the Eastern Question, and the Arabs not at all. He did, however, devote some attention to India and South East Asia, and sketched the theory of the Asiatic mode of production, which was subsequently developed by others.

Not surprisingly, given the inadequate and inaccurate information available to them, the contribution of the sociological founding fathers to the understanding of Islam was of limited value—though some of them, notably Comte, Durkheim, and the otherwise unremarkable Gustave Le Bon and Edmond Demolins, had a considerable influence on Muslim writers. Of greater significance was the stimulus which they gave to the orientalists, to elaborate, or, more often, to refute their specific assertions, and—more important—to use their concepts and methods in new lines of enquiry. Since the beginning of this century a number of Islamicists have followed this path. Prince Caetani, a disciple of Comte, brought a positivistic analysis to bear on the career of the Prophet and the beginnings of Islam. Carl Heinrich Becker, a friend of Weber and Troeltsch, tried to prove that Islam was not by nature hostile to economic progress, and that Islamic civilisation, Hellenistic in origin, belonged with Christendom and not with the true Asia. Other social theorists—such as Pareto, Le Play, Breysig, Durkheim—have had their disciples among the orientalists, as have also more recent scholars, notably Robert Redfield of Chicago.

ONE CASE IS of special interest—that of Karl Marx. Marxist analysis of Islam has been, broadly, of three types. One of these is the doctrine of the Asiatic mode of production. Briefly sketched by Marx and Engels, in modest recognition that their system of categories, derived from European history, might not be of universal validity, it was taken up by some later Marxist scholastics who, by combining passages or even single sentences, written at different times, some of them in letters, drafts, and newspaper articles, were able to construct a coherent system of revealed thought. Most discussion of the Asiatic mode of production has been concerned with China, some with India; the Islamic world has received little attention. Recently, however, the current revival of interest in this branch of Marxism has spread to Turkey, where a few young economists have tried to detect the Asiatic mode of production in the Ottoman Empire.[10]

The Asiatic mode of production, in which there is no private ownership of land and consequently no class war, only a simple opposition between the terrorised mass of the population and the all-encompassing state bureaucracy, is one of Marx's most accurate insights—not as history, but as prophecy. For

[9] The effects of this Western mood on the dialogue between Islamicists and Muslims is discussed by G. E. von Grunebaum, "Approaching Islam: a Digression", in *Middle Eastern Studies* (1970), VI, pp. 127-149.

[10] On these controversies, see the excellent study by Gianni Sofri, *Il modo di produzione asiatico; storia di una controversia marxista* (Turin, 1969).

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some reason Stalin disliked the theory of the Asiatic mode of production, and had virtually banned it by 1938. Since then, Soviet scholarship has had to fit the history of Islam into the authorised sequence of the ancient (*i.e.* slave), feudal, and bourgeois modes of production. There has been much argument on how precisely this is to be done. A good example of this literature, by the late Professor E. A. Belyaev, has recently become available in English.[11]

Covering the period from the fifth to the tenth centuries, it presents what one might call a moderate Soviet orthodox interpretation of the mission of Muhammad and the rise of Islam, with a characteristic mixture of loyalties, concepts, and purposes. The Slavs make a brief appearance as those to whom "the working masses" of the Byzantine Empire looked "as their allies and deliverers." The endless sufferings, untiring energy, and "productive activity of the toiling masses" are duly contrasted with the perfidy, cruelty, and general villainy of their royal, feudal and religious exploiters. Special stress is laid on the horrors of Arab conquest and rule in Central Asia, in much the same way as French historians of an earlier generation used to dwell on the devastation which the Arab raiders had wrought in North Africa—and no doubt for the same reasons.

Not the least interesting parts of Belyaev's book are the surveys of previous scholarly work at the beginning of each chapter. These deal with both Western and Soviet scholarship (modern Arab and other Muslim scholarship is contemptuously dismissed as worthless or at best secondary). Only two Arab authors, Bandali Juzi and Emil Tuma, both Marxists, receive special mention. Among Western historians of the Arabs, he considers Clément Huart and Philip Hitti the best, and also speaks very highly of the Belgian Jesuit scholar Henri Lammens. Among Soviet scholars, the prime concern was how to fit Islamic history into the given, predetermined framework. Belyaev rejects the "merchant-capitalistic" theory of Islamic origins, as "clearly at variance with the fundamental tenets of Marxism-Leninism", and also condemns the widely accepted "early feudal" interpretation, on the lesser charge that it does not accord with the evidence. The attempts by Morozov, Klimovitch and Tolstov to prove that Muhammad never existed are similarly rejected. In Belyaev's view, the motive force of Islam came from the slave-owning mercantile bourgeoisie of Mecca and Medina, which arose within a decaying primitive-communal society. The Qur'an, which he considers to have been concocted after the death of Muhammad, expresses the new ideology, justifying "inequality in property, slavery and development of exchanges." "A slave-holding Allah is described as a typical merchant, reflecting all the features of the trading community of Mecca." Only after the conquest, and under the Caliphate, did an early feudal order replace slave production. The main purpose of the early Caliphate was "to ensure by armed might the economic subservience of the labouring majority to the wealthy minority."

On the economic and social history of the early Caliphate, Belyaev makes a number of interesting and sometimes stimulating suggestions—not of course offered as such, but rather laid down with a certitude unknown to Western scholarship since the Reformation.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS and many other writings of the same kind is basically polemical; to refute, rather than to explain, Islamic beliefs, and to discredit any view of the Islamic past which might nurture Muslim pride and encourage opposition to Soviet rule in Muslim lands. Similar purposes, at an earlier date, inspired some British, French, and Dutch colonial historians—though these never enjoyed the right to silence those who disagreed with them. More recently there have been attempts at a less crudely propagandist Marxist study of Islam, by scholars like I. P. Petrushevsky in Russia and Maxime Rodinson in France, notably in the latter's *Islam et capitalisme* (1966). M. Rodinson declares his unorthodoxy, and disclaims what he variously calls vulgar Marxism, demi-Marxism, pseudo-Marxism, pragmatist Marxism, philosophic Marxism, and institutional Marxism. He even complains of the imprecision of Marx's use of "feudal", and considers the term inappropriate to medieval Islamic society. Nevertheless, he remains a practising Marxist, and devotes much effort to intra-Marxist disputation and to problems of the correct disposition of Islamic social and economic history in Marxist terms.

Many besides Marxists share the two underlying assumptions—first, that there is some universal pattern or sequence of economic and social development, and second, that a model or norm of this development can be constructed from Western experience, which combines the advantages of being the best

[11] E. A. Belyaev, *Arabs, Islam and the Arab Caliphate in the Early Middle Ages* (tr. from the Russian by Adolphe Gourevitch; New York, London, Jerusalem, 1969).

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studied, and our own. Both assumptions are questionable.

FOR SOME TIME the contribution of social science to the study of Islam consisted of the *obiter dicta*—mostly ill-informed—of the great generalists, and the responses or reactions of orientalists—mostly philologists and historians—who read their works. The next stage came when scholars trained in a social science discipline began to deal directly and at first hand with Islamic problems, and undertake field work in Islamic countries. This happened in several stages.

Imperial administration naturally gave special importance to ethnography, the relevance of which will be clear to all readers of Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* and of *Sovietskaya Etnografiya*. In the British, Russian, French, and Dutch Empires useful ethnographic surveys and monographs were produced, dealing with tribal and local customs, with local saint worship, with religious brotherhoods and much else. Most of this was purely descriptive—the only theoretical consideration, if indeed such it may be called, being the needs of the Imperial adminstration.

In time this kind of descriptive ethnography gave way to anthropological studies, of which a considerable number have by now been published. Usually, these are studies in detail—a village in Turkey, a tribe in Arabia, a sect in North Africa, and the like. Until very recently they were carried out for the most part by techniques evolved for use in the study of primitive and non-literate societies.

Anthropologists working in Islamic countries have usually fought shy of generalisations about Islam. At one time they refused, almost as a matter of principle, to take cognisance of literary evidence or even of scholarship based on such evidence. Latterly, they have become aware of the rewards—and hazards—of literary and historical studies, and have usually preferred to renounce the one and thus avoid the other.

Sociologists found greater difficulty than anthropologists in persuading themselves that the literary evidence of a literate society was irrelevant to their enquiries. For a long time they warily left the sociology of Islam to the orientalist, who, trusting in his philological sword and buckler to strike true and guard him from error, tackled sociology and history, theology and literature with equal readiness and often, alas, with equal competence.

A NEW PHASE BEGAN when social scientists, while remaining primarily concerned with their discipline, acquired sufficient linguistic and historical knowledge to become acceptable regional specialists—acceptable, that is, to those whose criteria were linguistic and historical. These are still very few, and usually owe their rare combination of skills to personal circumstances—to the accidental opportunities of birth, war, and employment.

Professor Clifford Geertz's *Islam Observed* (1968)[12] is thus a work of courage as well as distinction. An anthropologist with field experience in both Morocco and Java, he has had the interesting idea of studying and comparing the development and condition of Islam in these two countries, at opposite ends of the Islamic world. At first sight, this might seem a strange approach. What, one might ask, could a Muslim observer learn of Christianity by comparing the practice of the faith in, say, California and Ethiopia?

There are two answers to this question. The first is that an informed, perceptive, and rigorous Muslim observer might indeed learn a great deal about the nature of the Christian religion from such an enquiry, especially if he could speak and read both English and Amharic. The second, which is more immediately to the point, is that Islam has not yet undergone the differentiation which has overtaken Christianity in the last few centuries. Islam, not only chronologically, is in its fourteenth, not its twentieth century; it has still to experience the processes of reform and secularisation which have transformed and divided the once-united Christian world. In modern times, Islamic identity has been reinforced by a new shared experience—the penetration, domination and (in most areas) the departure of European colonialists.

It is obvious that there is much that the social scientist can contribute to the study of Islam, and that there are many things, in early as well as modern times, which he alone, with the special skills of his profession, is able to study and explain. Social scientists, or historians using social science concepts, have already made distinctive and important contributions to the study of Islam and it may well be that these transplants will in time produce a flowering comparable with those of European oriental scholarship following the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the philological golden age in the nineteenth century.

BEFORE THAT CAN HAPPEN, however, there are certain difficulties that must be overcome. It may be noticed that among modern scholars

[12] Clifford Geertz, *Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia* (1968).

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using the sociological approach, the most successful are those who have also served a philological apprenticeship. For the others there remains the problem of how to understand a society for which the principal written sources of study are locked in a strange script, requiring the mastery of a different language to read them, and the intimate study of a civilisation to interpret them. Most of the solutions propounded to the problem rest on one or both of two dubious assumptions: that it is possible for the social scientist to acquire within a short time a "working knowledge" of an oriental language which will be sufficient for his purpose, and that the use of translators and informants is an adequate substitute for direct personal access to the evidence.

Some branches of Islamic civilisation, such as art and architecture, can be studied without much reference to texts. But the greater part is beset with pitfalls for the unwary student who would venture into the field without adequate study of the language in which his sources are written and in which the people whose lives and endeavours he is examining think, write, and speak. Most modern techniques of field research in the social sciences relate to one of two situations: either the researcher is dealing with a sector of his own civilisation, whose historical and cultural pattern is known to him as part of his own education and upbringing, or else he is dealing with a primitive society, where historical and literary evidence can be disregarded because it does not exist. What has not yet been adequately faced is the problem of field research in a literate, historical society other than that of the field-researcher himself. This, it seems to me, is the basic problem which must be solved before western social science can make a really effective and autonomous contribution to the better understanding of Islam.

Putti

Floating in blue Tiepolos,
these spoiled and indolent ones,
or tumbling in Titians:
life as perpetual fluttering fun.

Pampered offspring of Venice,
they smile as they romp in the air,
working for Zeus,
arranging the gross master's affairs.

In Titian's *Rape of Europa*
these boys with blond curls
and blank looks
stare at the helpless innocent girl

who straddles the bull's back.
Zeus, the almighty lout,
takes her away.
In the distance her girlfriends shout.

No use. She'll soon be at sea
and still in the sheltering bay
the putti will hover,
playful and innocent, enjoying the day.

Stephen Miller

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John Mole

Three Chantefables

The Pelican

Captain Jonathan,
Eighteen and handsome,
Caught the first pelican
He could lay hands on,

But when Jonathan's pelican
Laid eggs for Jonathan
Out popped pelicans
Exactly like Jonathan's,

From which second pelicans'
Eggs laid for Jonathan
Out peeped a pelican
From the crack in each shell again. . . .

Alas, poor Jonathan!

This could go on a long time
If you can't make omelettes.

The Whale

Pity the poor whale—
She is nothing at all
But nostrils and an enormous lung.
She feeds cold milk to her young.
Nevertheless, piecemeal,
She builds a whale
Nest on the ocean bed
For each huge sleepyhead.
Beneath her move
Crustaceous depths, above
The celestial foam,
The wake of liners steaming home.

The Pike

The pike
Has journeys to make—
With a flick of his tail
He's off for the Nile
Or the Ganges
"Or" he says
"If I don't like either
There's the Tagus, the Tiber,
The Yangtze-Kiang
Or. . . .
What am I waiting for?"

Bursting with plans
He adjusts his fins.

And the moon, pike?
You could make it there too
Inside a week
Couldn't you?

Pike, I wish I had your go.

(Adapted from the French of Robert Desnos)

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SCIENCE

Genius in Science

By Michael Polanyi

WE ACCEPT the results of science, and we must accept them, without having any strict proof that they are true. Strictly speaking all natural sciences are inexact. They could all conceivably be false, but we accept them as true because we consider doubts that may be raised against them to be unreasonable. Juries base their findings on the distinction between "reasonable doubts" which they must accept, and "unreasonable doubts" which they must disregard. They are instructed to make this distinction and to do it without having any set rules to rely upon. For it is precisely because there are no rules for deciding certain factual questions of supreme importance that these questions are assigned to the jury to decide them by their personal judgment. The scientist combines the functions of judge and jury. Having applied to his findings a number of specifiable criteria, he must ultimately decide in the light of his own personal judgment whether the remaining conceivable doubts should be set aside as unreasonable.

Once it is recognised that all scientific discoveries ultimately rest on the scientist's personal judgment, the path seems open for unifying the whole sequence of personal decisions, beginning with sighting a problem and then pursuing the problem throughout an enquiry, all the way to the discovery of a new fact of nature.

WE SHALL MEET the main features of the principle that controls scientific enquiry—from the dawn of a problem to the finding of its solution—by looking first at its highest actions in the work of genius.

Genius is known for two faculties which may seem incompatible. Genius is a gift of inspiration; poets back to Homer have asked their Muse for inspiration, and scientists back to Archimedes have acknowledged the coming of a bright idea as an event that suddenly visited them. But we have also ample evidence of an opposite kind; genius has been said to consist in taking infinite pains, and all kinds of creative pursuits are in fact extremely strenuous.

How can these two aspects of genius hang together? Is there any hard work which will induce an inspiration to visit us? How can we possibly conjure up an inspiration without even knowing from what corner it may come? And since it is ourselves who shall eventually produce the inspiration, how can it come to us as a surprise?

Yet this is what our creative work actually does. It is precisely what scientific discovery does: we make a discovery and yet it comes as a surprise to us. The first task of a theory of creativity, and of scientific discovery in particular, must be to resolve this paradox.

The solution can be found on a biological level, if we identify inspiration with "spontaneous integration" and look out for the effort that induces such integration. Suppose I move an arm to reach for an object: my intention sets in motion a complex integration of my muscles, an integration that carries out my purpose. My intention is about something that does not yet exist, in other words it is a project, a project conceived by my imagination. So it seems that it is the imagination that induces a muscular integration to implement a project that I form in my imagination.

Could we say that this integration is "spontaneous"? I think that in an important sense we can call it spontaneous, for we have no direct control over it. Suppose a physiologist were to demonstrate to us all the muscular operations by which we have carried out our action, we would be amazed at the wonderful mechanism that we had contrived in achieving our project. We would find that we had done something that profoundly surprises us.

This exemplifies a principle that controls all our deliberate bodily actions. Our imagination, thrusting towards a desired result, induces in us

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an integration of parts over which we have no direct control. We do not *perform* this integration: we *cause it to happen.* The effort of our imagination evokes its own implementation.

And the way we evoke a desired event by the action of our body offers in a nutshell a solution of the paradox of genius. It suggests that inspiration is evoked by the labours of the thrusting imagination and that it is this kind of imaginative labour that evokes the new ideas by which scientific discoveries are made.

THESE CONCLUSIONS may seem too fast; but they will be confirmed and enlarged by passing from voluntary action to visual perception. The constancy of objects seen is achieved by an integration of clues which takes place beyond our direct control. We see objects and their surroundings coherently by integrating two to three snapshots per second, which present to us overlapping images ranging over the area before us. The intelligent scanning of these consecutive snapshots shows that our imagination is at work guiding our integration. And we can add that in case of any difficulty in recognising what it is that we see, the imagination explores alternative possibilities by letting our eyes move around to look for such possibilities.

Different branches of science are based on different ways of seeing. When an object is composed of parts that function jointly, our vision integrates the sight of these parts into the appearance of a coherent functioning entity. This is how the engineer, who knows the way a machine works, sees the machine as a working whole. Such integration underlies all biology and psychology. The view of an organism, the sight of an intelligent animal, the image of a human person, are all based on such integrations. We may call these visual integrations spontaneous because their parts are not directly controlled and often cannot even be directly noticed. The process of scientific discovery consists generally of such integrations evoked by the work of the imagination.

Powers of Anticipation

THE PROGRESS of discovery falls into three main periods. The *first* is the sighting of a problem and the decision to pursue it; the *second,* the quest for a solution and the drawing of a conclusion; the *third,* the holding of the conclusion to be an established fact.

I have spoken of the way our eyesight organises consecutive snapshots by scanning them in an intelligent way, and how, in case of difficulty, the imagination explores alternative possibilities to find out what it is that we are seeing. These efforts of our eyesight are based on the assumption that any curious things before us are likely to have some hidden significance. Scientists speculating about strange things in nature act on a similar assumption. They try to interpret the facts they know, and go on collecting more facts, in the hope that these will reveal a coherence that is of interest to science. Such is the act of seeing a problem and pursuing it.

And here we meet a strange fact. In accepting the task of pursuing a problem, the scientist assumes it to be a *good* problem: a problem that he can solve by his own gifts and equipment and that it is worth undertaking in comparison with other available possibilities. He must estimate this; and such estimates are guesses. But such guesses have proved sufficiently good to secure the progress of scientific enquiry with a reasonable degree of efficiency. It is rare to come across years of futile efforts wasted, or else to find that major opportunities were patently missed. Indeed, the opportunities for discovery are so effectively exploited that the same discovery is often made simultaneously by two or three different scientists. There is no doubt, therefore, of the scientist's capacity to assess in outline the course of an enquiry that will lead to a result which, at the time he makes his assessment, is essentially indeterminate.

How can we explain this capacity? I have said that scientific discovery is in essence an extension of perception. Remember how the different images of an object presented to our eyes from various distances, at different angles and in changing light, are all seen jointly as one single object; and that it is in terms of this coherence that our eyes perceive real things. This bears deeply on science. Copernicus laid the foundations of modern science by claiming his discovery of the heliocentric system in these very terms. He showed that his system included a parallelism between the solar distances of the planets and their orbital periods, and on this coherence he based his insistence that his system was no mere computing device, but a real fact.

But such claims to know reality are questioned by our anti-metaphysical age. Can we define what it means to claim that an object is real? I think we can.

TO SAY THAT AN OBJECT is real is to anticipate that it will manifest its existence indefinitely

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hereafter. This is what Copernicus meant by insisting that his system was real. Copernicus anticipated the coming of future manifestations of his system, and these were in fact discovered by later astronomers who had accepted his claim that his system was real. *We can conclude then that, in nature, the coherence of an aggregate shows that it is real and that the knowledge of this reality foretells the coming of yet unknown future manifestations of such reality. This concept of reality extended to include all the phases of a scientific enquiry. It explains the way discovery is anticipated, from the sighting of a problem to finding its solution.*

BUT LET me first stop for a moment to recall the antecedents which led to this theory. I began my work on the nature of science twenty-five years ago, guided by the idea that we make scientific discoveries in the same way we strain our eyesight to perceive an obscure object; and that in this effort we are guided by anticipating to some extent the direction which will prove most fruitful.

> A potential discovery (I wrote) may be thought to attract the mind which will reveal it—inflaming the scientist with creative desire and imparting to him intimations that guide him from clue to clue and from surmise to surmise.[1]

For years I have written about this kind of anticipation.[2] At one stage I was joined in this idea by George Polya,[3] whose observations of mathematical discovery I had relied on from the start of my enquiry. And more recently I met with a brilliant description of anticipation in the posthumous work of C. F. A. Pantin, who wrote that:

> [Intuition] does not only suddenly present solutions to our conscious mind, it also includes the uncanny power that somehow we know that a particular set of phenomena or a particular set of notions are highly significant: and we are aware of that long before we can say what that signification is.[4]

But only now can I see at last an explanation for such anticipations. I now see that the anticipations offered to us by good problems should be understood in the same way as the anticipations aroused by all true facts of nature. Thus, when a coherent set of clues presents us with the sense of a hidden reality in nature, we are visited by an anticipation similar to that which we feel in seeing any object already recognised to be real. The expectations attached to a good problem differ only in their dynamic intensity from the expectations that will be attached to any facts, eventually to be discovered in the end, once the problem has been solved. Of course, the sense of reality implied in adopting a problem is pointing more clearly in a particular direction. And the results anticipated in this kind of reality are expected to appear sooner than the prospects implied in affirming the reality of an established fact. But I regard such differences as mere matters of degree.

THE WHOLE OF SCIENCE, as it is known to us, has come into existence by virtue of good problems that have led to the discovery of their solution. The fact that scientists can espy good problems is therefore a faculty as essential to science as is the capacity to solve problems and to prove such solutions to be right. In other words, the capacity rightly to choose a line of thought the end of which is vastly indeterminate, is as much part of the scientific method as is the power of assuring the exactitude of the con-

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[1] Michael Polanyi, *Science, Faith and Society* (Oxford University Press, 1946; Phoenix Edition, 1964), p. 33.

[2] Michael Polanyi, "Problemsolving", *British Journal of Philosophy and Science*, vol. VIII (August 1957), pp. 89-103.

[3] George Polya, *Mathematical Discovery* (1965), vol. II, p. 63.

[4] C. F. A. Pantin, *The Relation between the Sciences* (ed. Pantin and Thorpe), (1968), p. 121-122.

We may look also at other creative works. Kant has described in the *Critique of Pure Reason* the part of anticipation in the pursuit of philosophic problems. He wrote: "It is unfortunate that not until we have unsystematically collected observations for a long time to serve as building materials, following the guidance of an idea which lies concealed in our minds, and indeed only after we have spent much time in the technical disposition of these materials, do we first become capable of viewing the idea in a clearer light and of outlining it architectonically as one whole according to the intentions of reason. . . ."

H. W. Janson *(History of Art,* 1962, p. 11) describes anticipation in making a painting. "It is a strange and risky business in which the maker never quite knows what he is making until he has actually made it, or to put it another way, it is a game of find-and-seek in which the seeker is not sure what he is looking for, until he has found it. . . ."

Northrop Frye *(T. S. Eliot,* 1963, p. 28) speaks of Eliot's account of anticipation: "The poet has no idea of what he wants to say until he has found the words of his poem". . . "[He] may not know what is coming up, but whatever it is, his whole being is bent on realising it."

Anticipations of this kind resolve the problem of Meno in which Plato questions the possibility of pursuing an enquiry in our inevitable ignorance of what we are looking for.

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clusions eventually arrived at. And both faculties consist in recognising real coherence in nature and sensing its indeterminate implications for the future.

This conclusion fulfils in substance my hopes of finding the same principles of personal judgment at work at all stages of a scientific enquiry, from the sighting of a problem to the discovery of its solution. Problems are discovered by a roaming speculative imagination, and once a problem is adopted, the imagination is thrust in the direction of the problem's expectations. This evokes new ideas of coherence which, if true, reduce the indeterminacy of the enquiry. The speculative or experimental examination of these ideas then directs a new thrust of the imagination that evokes yet further surmises; and so the pursuit is narrowed down ever further, until eventually an idea turns up which can claim to solve the problem.

This rough sketch must suffice for the moment to outline the sequence of "infinite pains" that finally evoke a surprise, claiming to be the solution of the problem.

Rationality to the Rescue?

BUT SCIENTIFIC OPINION has been reluctant to accept the fact that the scientist is guided essentially by a vague sense of still unrevealed facts. Hence textbooks of physics have taught for decades that Einstein discovered relativity as an explanation of Michelson's observation that the earth's rotation causes no flow in the surrounding ether. And when I pointed out about twelve years ago that this was a pure invention,[5] the only response I evoked was from Professor Adolf Grünbaum of Pittsburgh,[6] who said that my description of Einstein's way to discovery was like Schiller's story that his poetic inspiration came to him by smelling rotten apples. Fortunately, a study recently published by Professor Gerald Holton has shown at last, in great detail, that I had been right.[7]

I have mentioned this story to illustrate the temper of our age which prefers a tangible explanation to one relying on more personal powers of the mind, even though the plain facts do show these less tangible forces at work. The theory of scientific discovery most influential today expresses this preference by dividing the process of discovery sharply into the choice of a hypothesis and the testing of the chosen hypothesis. The first part (the choice of a hypothesis) is deemed to be inexplicable by any rational procedure, while the second (the testing of the chosen hypothesis) is recognised as a strict procedure forming the scientist's essential task.

This theory of scientific discovery would save the strictness of science by declaring that scientific discoveries are merely tentative hypotheses which can be strictly tested by confronting their implications with experience. And that if any of the implications of a hypothesis conflicts with experience, the hypothesis must be instantly abandoned; that indeed, even if the hypothesis is accepted on the grounds of having been confirmed in its predictions, it will ever remain on trial ready to be abandoned if any experience turns up that contradicts any of its claims. We are told that unless a hypothesis produces testable conclusions it should be disregarded as lacking any substantial significance.[8]

LET ME TEST this theory. There may be cases where a scientific discovery was made and only claimed as such after some additional implications of it had been tested; but there is plenty of evidence to show that this is not necessary and is indeed, often impracticable.

On 11 November 1572 Tycho Brahe observed a new star in Cassiopeia, and this discovery refuted the Aristotelian doctrine of an unchangeable empyrean. This happened before the days of the telescope, and indeed the same observation was also made in China. The discovery was complete without producing testable implications, exactly as the eruption of Vesuvius (on 24 August, A.D. 79) was established as a fact, without any test of its vast implications. Or take Kepler's discovery that for the six then known planets the square of the orbital period was proportional to the cube of the solar distance. The figures underlying this discovery had been known for eighty years or more; I happened to test the relative solar distances of the planets made available by the work of Copernicus and found that they agree with Kepler's Third

[5] Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge* (1958), pp. 9-13.

[6] Adolf Grünbaum, *Philosophical Problems of Space and Time* (1963), pp. 385-386.

[7] Gerald Holton, "Einstein, Michelson and the 'Crucial Experiment'", *Isis*, vol. 60 (1969), pp. 133-197.

[8] Clearly, the position to which I am referring is that which Sir Karl Popper stated in *Logic der Forschung* (1934), translated into English as *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (1946). It is this statement that has been most widely influential and though it was modified in some parts in Popper's *Conjectures and Refutations* (1963), the changes do not substantially affect the principles of "refutationalism" which I am examining here.

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Law within two per cent. All that Kepler did was to recognise this relationship, which is his Third Law. Yet Kepler hailed his discovery as the crowning of his search for celestial harmony, even though no testable implications of it were known at the time and indeed for a long time after his death.

Admittedly, many discoveries were not made at one stroke. But of these too many fail to exemplify the orthodox "hypothetico-deductive model." On 13 March 1781, William Herschel observed a slowly moving nebulous disk which he first took to be a comet; but, after a few weeks of watching its motion, he recognised it as a new planet, to be named Uranus. Later on, Leverrier and Adams, basing themselves on the irregularities of Uranus, derived the existence of one more planet, and the prediction of its position promptly led to its discovery. It was named Neptune. Thus the existence of Uranus and Neptune were claimed the moment they were observed and this observation completed their discovery without regard to particular testable implications.

Turning to physics, we can take Max von Laue's discovery of the diffraction of X-rays in 1912 as a parallel case to this. A conversation with P. P. Ewald aroused in Laue the idea that X-rays would show optical diffraction when passing through a crystal. His attempt to find experimental help to test his idea met with opposition from the director of the laboratory, but when his request finally prevailed, the result confirmed his expectation, and he announced his discovery which was accepted on this evidence.

Further, we sometimes find examples of "beautiful" discoveries neither based on any new observation nor predicting anything which would confirm or refute them—*e.g.*, in theoretical work in physics and physical chemistry. Van't Hoff's derivation of the chemical mass action law from the Second Law of Thermodynamics was a fundamental discovery based only on known facts and predicting nothing. In a period extending close on half a century, no one has been able to find a test for the statistical interpretation of quantum mechanics that we owe to Max Born. Its radically new conception of physical laws as predicting only the probability and not the actual course of events controlled by the law is generally accepted today, though it was originally grounded on no new facts and has never offered factual implications that could test it.

Such unempirical theories can be of supreme importance in all the experimental sciences, including biology. Darwinism is an example of it, and indeed in two senses. First, for seventy years Darwinism was accepted by science, even though its evolutionary mechanism could not be understood in terms of known facts, and second, up to this day no such empirical implications of it are known which, if experimentally tested, could disprove the theory. The second point is widely recognised, so I shall only demonstrate the first.

DURING THE FIRST FORTY YEARS following the publication of the *Origin of Species* in 1859, it became increasingly clear that the kind of variations known at that time were not sufficiently hereditary to form the basis of a selective process producing evolutionary transformation.[9] Yet the authority of scientific opinion continued to support the theory of evolution by natural selection and has spread its deep influence on the world view of humanity. After the discovery of Mendelian mutations in 1900 the opposite difficulty arose. These variations were hereditary, but they were much too massive for producing a process of gradual adaptation. Yet the acceptance of Darwinism as our world view, supported by science, remained unshaken—while the new contradictions remained unexplained for another three decades. This difficulty may have been overcome since 1930 through the rise of neo-Darwinism; and if this new theory holds, the previous disregard of the fact that the theory of natural selection conflicted with the known laws of nature may turn out to have been justified.[10]

[9] C. D. Darlington, *Darwin's Place in History* (1960), p. 40. Professor Darlington has described in Chapter 8, entitled "The Retreat from Natural Selection", how in the successive editions of Darwin's *Origin of Species* natural selection is gradually abandoned and evolution "shored up with Lamarckian inheritance".

[10] The present situation was described as follows by Julian Huxley, *Evolution the Modern Synthesis* (1942), p. 116; and repeated in the same words in its revised version in 1963.

> "It must be admitted that the direct and complete proof of the utilization of mutations in evolution under natural conditions has not yet been given. . . . Thus it is inevitable that for the present we must rely mainly on the convergence of a number of separate lines of evidence each partial and indirect or incomplete, but severally cumulative and demonstrative."

J. Maynard Smith in an article entitled "The Status of Neo-Darwinism," pp. 82-89, in *Towards A Theoretical Biology*, (ed. C. H. Waddington, 1969), has listed some evidence as proving that Neo-Darwinism is not "tautological". But he merely shows, as Huxley does, that the evidence so far supports the theory.

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To sum up, we have seen examples to show that important scientific discoveries can be made at a glance and established without any subsequent tests; and that there have been great theoretical discoveries which had no testable experimental content at all. We have seen also that a theory interpreting in a novel way a vast range of experience was accepted by science, and then firmly held for many years by science, though its assumptions contradicted the laws of nature as known at the time; and also that it continues to be held by science, as other important theories are, though it has never been testable by predictions that could be empirically refuted.

Personal Judgment in Science

MY OWN THEORY of scientific knowledge is, and has been from the start twenty-five years ago, that science is an extension of perception. It is a kind of integration of parts to wholes, as *Gestalt* psychology has described; but in contrast to *Gestalt*, which is a mere equilibration of certain bits to form a coherent shape, it is the outcome of deliberate integration revealing a hitherto hidden real entity. There are no strict rules for discovering things that hang together in nature, nor even for telling whether we should accept or reject an apparent coherence as a fact. There is always a residue of personal judgment involved in deciding whether to accept or reject any particular piece of evidence be it as a proof of a true regularity or, on the contrary, as a refutation of an apparent regularity. This is how I saw and accepted the fact that, strictly speaking, all empirical science is inexact. And as I came to realise that all such integration is largely based, like perception itself, on tacit elements of which we have only a vague knowledge, I concluded that science too was grounded on an act of personal judgment.

To show this, I became for many years a scandal-monger, collecting cases where the most generally accepted rules of scientific procedure had been flaunted, and flaunted to the advantage of science. My first such case showed that even though a new idea conflicts from the start with experience, it may be generally accepted by science. The periodic system of elements shows that the sequence of rising atomic weights produces a striking pattern of the elements in respect of their chemical character. But two pairs of elements fit into the pattern only the wrong way round, that is, in the direction of decreasing weights. Yet at no time has this caused the system to be called in question, let alone to be abandoned.

Another example: the idea that light is composed of particles was proposed by Einstein—and upheld, still unexplained, for twenty years—in spite of its being in sharp conflict with the well-established wave nature of light. Commenting on the later history of these cases, (which were among my first scandals), I concluded that any exception to a rule may involve not its refutation but the elucidation of its deeper meaning.

And I went on to declare that the process of explaining away observed deviations from accepted teachings of science is in fact indispensable to the daily routine of research. In my laboratory—I said—I find the laws of nature formally contradicted every day; but I explain these events by the assumption of experimental error. I know that this may cause me one day to explain away a fundamentally new phenomenon and to miss a great discovery. Such things have often happened in the history of science. Yet I shall continue to explain away my odd results, for if every anomaly observed in a laboratory were taken at its face value, research would degenerate into a wild-goose chase after fundamental novelties.

BUT THESE PRODUCTS of my early scandal-mongering were surpassed by a statement of Einstein which recently came to my notice.[11] Werner Heisenberg has told the story how, in the course of shaping his quantum theory, he told Einstein that he proposed to go back from Nils Bohr's theory to quantities that could be really observed. To which Einstein replied that the truth lay the other way round. He said: "Whether you can observe a thing or not depends on the theory which you use. It is the theory which decides what can be observed." Max Planck has also rejected Heisenberg's claim to deal with observables, on the grounds that science is a theory bearing on observations, but never including observations.[12]

The position of observations in the face of prevailing theories is of course precarious. Take

[11] W. Heisenberg, "Theory, Criticism and a Philosophy", in *From a Life of Physics*, special supplement of the Bulletin of the International Atomic Energy Agency (Vienna), pp. 36-37. The publication is quite recent; the conversation with Einstein must have occured in 1925 or just before this date.

[12] Max Planck in *Positivismus und Reale Aussenwelt*, (Leipzig: Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft, 1931), says (p. 21) ". . . there exists absolutely no physical magnitude which can be measured in itself."

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once more the famous experiment of Michelson and Morley which demonstrated the absence of the ether drift corresponding to the rotation of the earth. Far from rejoicing at this great discovery, which was eventually to form the main experimental support for Einstein's relativity. Michelson called his result a failure. Professor Holton has told in the paper that I quoted before how both Kelvin and Rayleigh spoke of Michelson's result as "a real disappointment", and Sir Oliver Lodge even said that this experiment might have to be explained away. Thus the ether theory, which was firmly supported by the current interpretation of physics, caused the experiment to be distrusted. But when some thirty-five years later the same experiment was repeated (with improved instruments) by D. C. Miller and this time showed the presence of an ether drift, this result was rejected in its turn for by this time relativity had overthrown the ether theory. And this time, of course, the theory was rightly preferred to the experiment.

I HAVE NO SPACE HERE to tell in detail the story that I picked up at the very beginning of my scandal-mongering, of the way scientists of the first rank came out with experiments showing a transformation of elements, because they were encouraged by the radio-active transmutations discovered by Rutherford. There was one epidemic of such publications from 1907 to 1913 that was evoked by Rutherford's discovery (in 1903) that radioactivity involves a transformation of elements. A second epidemic spread from 1922 to 1928, in response to Rutherford's discovery (in 1919) of an artificial transformation of elements. The observations published during these epidemics would otherwise have been cast aside as mere "dirt-effect."[13]

Let me add a counter example, where plausibility justly triumphed over observation. I have in mind Eddington's derivation from his theory of the universe, developed in the mid-1920s, that the reciprocal of the "fine-structure constant"—usually denoted by $hc/2\pi e^2$—is equal to the number 137. The theory was generally rejected and this was facilitated by the fact that the experimental value for Eddington's figure was at the time 137·307 with a probable error of only ±0·048. However, by the passing of twenty years new experiments gave a value of 137·009, which brilliantly confirmed Eddington's theory. But this agreement was rejected as fortuitous by the overwhelming majority of scientists; and they were right.[14]

To sum up: Science is the result of an integration, similar to that of common perception. It establishes hitherto unknown coherences in nature. Our recognition of these coherences is largely based, like perception is, on clues of which we are not focally aware and which are indeed often unidentifiable. Current conceptions of science about the nature of things always affect our recognition of coherence in nature. From the sighting of a problem to the ultimate decision of rejecting still conceivable doubts, factors of plausibility are ever in our minds. This is what is meant by saying that, strictly speaking, all natural science is an expression of personal judgment.

Wider Views

THE MACHINERY OF GENIUS, which I have described, is at work all the way from the start to the finish of an enquiry. And once we have recognised this mechanism we can see that we are ourselves the ultimate masters of its workings. Exactitude is recognised then to be always a matter of degree and ceases to be an all-surpassing ideal. The supremacy of the exact sciences is rejected and psychology, sociology, and the humanities are set free from the vain and misleading efforts of emulating mathematical physics.

I started on this line many years ago in a short paper entitled "The Value of the Inexact."[15] I pointed out that if we insisted on exactitude of procedure, we would have no chemistry, or at least none to speak of. For chemistry relies for its guidance on judgments of "stability", "affinity", "tendency", as descriptions of chemical processes and also on the skilful application of rules of thumb as guides for acting on such judgments. And the value of the inexact goes much further. It alone makes possible the science of biology. For the structure of living things can be recognised only if we allow our vision to integrate the sight of parts to the view of a coherently functioning entity, an entity which vanishes if analysed in terms of physics and chemistry.

I have defined scientific value as the joint product of three virtues, *(1)* accuracy, *(2)* range of theory, and *(3)* interest of subject matter.[16] This triad of values distributes our appreciation evenly over the whole range of sciences. We have then greater exactitude and elegance

[13] For details see my *Science, Faith and Society*, (1946), Appendix 2.
[14] For further details see *Personal Knowledge*, (1958), pp. 43, 151, 158, 160.
[15] See *Science, Faith and Society*, (1946), chapter II, section II.
[16] Michael Polanyi, *Philosophy of Science*, vol. II (1936), p. 233 ff.

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being balanced by a lesser intrinsic interest of subject matter, or else the other way round. For example, most subjects of modern physics are interesting only to the scientists, while the horizon of biology ranges over our experience of animals and plants, and of our own lives as human beings. So the glory of mathematical precision and elegance, in which physics far surpasses biology, is balanced in biology by the much greater interest of its subject matter.

Once science is appraised by a three-fold grading, all scholarship is elevated to the same pride: a pride free of pangs about not being a real science. The foolish hierarchy of Auguste Comte is smashed and flattened out.

I AM NOT MAKING EXCUSES for the inexactitude of science, nor for our personal actions, which ultimately decide what to accept as the truth in science. I do not see our intervention as a regrettable necessity, nor regard its result as a second-rate kind of knowledge. It appears second-rate only in the light of a fallacy which systematically corrupts our conception of knowledge and distorts thereby wide regions of our culture.

As You Like It

(with some apologies to Auden's "Musée des Beaux Arts")

It is wrong. People are not indifferent,
let alone oblivious, to the momentary,
great scene
as it passes their way.
No, like Mrs Gudgeon, the smart little char
come with our London flat,
listening
to the wireless, a splendid array
of "the best minds"
engaged in difficult,
arduous talk, and she absorbed in it,
to her husband's
"What're you listening for?
You don't understand a word they say,"
rejoining,
"O I enjoy it, just the sound
of it, so musical. And anyway I do take away
from it whatever I like,
then make of it
whatever I will in my own mind." Well,
like Mrs Gudgeon,
most of us, watching
the moment, some spectacular event,
whether it be Icarus,
Cleopatra consorting
with the streets, or the astronauts
cavorting on the moon,
take away what
we can use. This is the greatness
of each creature,
the mouse at the Feast
of the Gods, one crumb doing for him
what heaped-up platters cannot do for them.

Theodore Weiss

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NOTES & TOPICS

Letter from Germany

Is Our Society Disintegrating?

By Marion Dönhoff

SCARCELY a week goes by in Germany without some occurrence which seems to be symptomatic of some sickness in our society. A few weeks ago it was a big police round-up of members of a left-wing political group which had apparently pledged itself to serious "criminal" action. A week later a television station and a number of newspapers closely connected with the Conservative Right, having by dubious means got possession of certain secret Berlin documents, broadcast them to the world, ostensibly "in the national interest" but more probably to embarrass the Brandt Government, since they seem quite indifferent to the harm that may be done to the people of Berlin, or the Federal Republic, or its Allies.

I note that the number of conscripts refusing the draft has now risen to 5%, and that the pro-Communist Spartacus League is growing rapidly in many universities; that autonomous student bodies such as *AStA* and the student parliaments, owing to the general apathy, are falling into the hands of radical cadres; and that there is constant vandalising of buses and trains, of homes for the aged and other institutions which, one would have thought, would have been immune. Finally, it is very evident that criticism of the pluralist democratic society and the "capitalist economy" is growing on all sides. Does all this point to a serious and lasting state of disruption and the disintegration of our post-war German society?

There are questions to which widely differing answers may be propounded according to the angle from which they are approached. Coming to Istanbul from Europe, for example, one feels that one is truly entering "the East"; but coming from the depths of Asia one is impressed by the city's European aspect.

As to the present question, in terms of the civic standards of law and order that have been accepted as normal in the past, what is happening today gives cause for very great concern. But are those past standards a really adequate yard-stick by which to measure the present, and one to which we must in all circumstances refer? This is questionable. It seems far more probable that anyone looking back on our present European epoch from the year 2,000 will see it all as amounting to the greatest bloodless revolution in the twentieth century, comparable, in its effect on every aspect of life, with the French Revolution.

Revolution in what sense? In the sense that people's attitudes—to sex, to the family, to society, Church, and State—have become fundamentally changed, and changed in a very elementary process.

If we view events in this light—not in terms of the outmoded norm, but in comparison with other revolutionary changes—then we can be thankful that so little force has been used, that no blood is flowing (at least here), and that the New, although it looks like an eruption, may be seen to be evolutionary, provided we approach it in the right spirit and know how to adapt ourselves to it.

It is certainly true that it makes far higher demands upon government and all persons in authority than does the case of violent revolution, when the only question is the amount of force to be used in suppressing it. (When can one open fire, and what weapons may be employed?) The problem today is to determine the limits of tolerance. (How much is to be acquiesced in without interference, how much endured without hitting back?)

What is certain is that this anti-authoritarian German generation, the immediate successors of the Hitler period of ideologised servitude, profoundly sceptical as it is of past values and mistrustful of everyone "who has something to say", must not be provoked by blind resistance into more extreme opposition. The confrontation must not be a trial of strength. It is, and must be, a test of nerves.

But what *is* the limit of tolerance? In this, as in all politics, the problem is to know where to draw the line. Limitless toleration is

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obviously not the answer. Complete freedom is an invitation to overstep the bounds of reason, and it encourages the misuse of force, since this is uncontrolled. Where, then, is the line to be drawn between the liberty of the individual and his relation to an over-riding system of values, without which no society can exist?

IN THE FIRST PLACE, what are the essential factors in the European revolution in which we Germans are involved? They are (on the one hand) the elemental force which is brushing aside all sexual and erotic taboos, and (on the other hand) the demand for democratisation, or "participation", which is to free all men from control or manipulation by others. The demand is based on a total critique of all existing institutions, and it is precisely this criticism which angers and wounds many Germans of the middle generation and appears to them highly dangerous.

Churchill once likened criticism in public life to pain in the human body: it isn't pleasant, but what would become of the body's health and sensitivity without the warning signals of pain? Scandal, he said, festers behind the monolithic façades of totalitarian states, since independent opinion cannot be voiced. The fact is that in authoritarian states, where anger and criticism accumulate until the dams burst, revolution must necessarily be a violent process. But, under our present West European system, change, innovation and adaptation can ensue as part of a process of constant evolution, provided always that the framework of pluralist democracy is maintained. The limit of tolerance must therefore be the point where a deliberate attempt is made to do away with this framework.

The New Left in Germany, as elsewhere, is attacking both the existing political set-up and the economic structure, that is to say, the two mainstays of what we think of as Western democracy. It demands that power should be taken away from "the few" and transferred to the People as a whole. But the Spartacists and the Communists afford us terrifying examples of what happens in this event. Never have so many been subjected to the will of so few as in countries where the dictatorship of the proletariat has been established.

The pluralist-democratic system which the New Left so bitterly opposes seeks, on the contrary, to divide power and spread it so that it can be kept under control. That the checks and balances inherent in a system of power-distribution are constantly threatened and undermined is undeniable. Groups and individuals will always attempt to further their particular interests at the expense of others. But if this fact is recognised, and the danger appreciated, it can be dealt with. This is not only our right but our duty.

The campaign against pluralist democracy is, in the economic field, a campaign against Capitalism. But is not the power of organised labour so very much greater under the capitalist system than in countries where "the workers and peasants" presumably have the final say? Much-maligned *Spätkapitalismus* has achievements to its credit which the Marxists believed that they alone could ensure after abolishing private property—namely, less exploitation and a greater share of welfare and security for the masses.

It will not be easy to create a new society for this revolutionary generation, and in any case it will not be the ideal society the young German and European radicals dream of. Little power of prophecy is needed to predict, in the light of a few thousand years of European experience, that this will never come about. For the human and ideological temptations remain constant, only the appeal varies: sometimes it is the lure of Power and Struggle, or of Romantic Heroism, or of Ideology. Sacrifices are forever being offered on one altar or another. And there will always be taboos—that there should be none at all is in itself a taboo.

SO WHERE is the boundary-line of tolerance to be drawn? We are in the middle of a European revolution. Reforms in Germany are proceeding in every field: in that of crime and punishment, in the schools and universities, and in the social sphere. No one can yet predict in detail what the society emerging from them will look like. But certain demands that will be made on it cannot be ignored: emancipation from the hypertrophy of narrow commercial interests, the priority of the general public interest over those of single groups and individuals, participation and co-determination, and the greatest possible measure of freedom and social justice.

One objective must be borne in mind. Instead of thinking only in terms of capacity and achievement, and thus stimulating the inborn strength of the individual often to the point of brutality, we must establish a scale of values which also takes into consideration the mastery of man's inborn weaknesses, for surely it is this new modern humanism which alone can guarantee a relatively humane society.

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Illich's De-Schooled Utopia

By Sidney Hook

WE ARE BEGINNING to understand that the rhetoric of revolutionary extremism is not simply a put-on or a form of exhibitionism or an outburst of politicalised aesthetic fury that titillates the pent-house *rentiers* of the New Left. Not only have ideas consequences, words have consequences, too, even if the ideas they express are vague and somewhat incoherent. The inflammatory language of the Black Panthers and the blood-chilling manifestos of the Weathermen may be empty of serious content. There can be little doubt, however, that they have had a profound effect on the behaviour of some of their initiates. The terrorism of the word—even revolutionary bull—prepares the way for the terrorism of the deed.

Something analogous is observable in the field of education. Paralleling the extremist position and inflated rhetoric of the revolutionist decrying the possibility of democratic social reform is the development of extremist positions in education decrying the possibility of intelligent school reform. Here, too, what was listened to with indulgence as an exaggerated expression of a universally shared dissatisfaction with the present state of schooling is beginning to have practical consequences. The existence of the school itself and the system of compulsory public education has come under fire in the United States. The professional teachers and their organisations are becoming the scapegoats of our discontent. Permanent tenure is under fierce attack in many quarters as primarily a shelter for incompetence at public expense. At the same time we are told that everyone has a natural birthright not only to learn but to teach. Every citizen is not only equally concerned with education, he is equally an authority about what should be learned and how. Those educational authorities, especially the professional teachers and administrators, who are dubious about this are really authoritarians masking themselves as adepts in the pseudo-science of pedagogy. In the interest of freedom we must abolish schools whose inhibiting and demoralising effects on the personalities of their charges are worse than those of our military and penal systems.

The most recent expression of this view is found in a slight volume, *De-schooling Society* by Ivan Illich.[1] It is a book whose absurd extremism warrants little attention from anyone endowed with a normal portion of common sense. The only reason for taking it seriously is that some of its positions are influencing the new radical critics of American education who, without subscribing to Illich's panacea, are accepting some of his assumptions about schools and schooling to fortify their attacks on current educational theory and practice and on professional teachers as "buttresses of the Establishment." Also disquieting is the fact that Illich's views seem to have won the endorsement of some officials of educational Institutes who purvey advice for liberal fees to the school systems of the nation.

Illich's thesis is a simple one—so simple that the reader hesitates for a moment in concluding that he really means what he writes. But he does. Our schools are unmitigatedly bad. All of them? Well, almost all. Then why not try to improve schooling by taking as a model the best schools? This is hopeless, a trap, says Illich. The "hidden curriculum" of schooling, of any formal schooling, inspires the "myth" that certified teachers—bureaucrats all—can use scientific knowledge to impart "humane and efficient" education. The only remedy is to abolish all formal schools and with it all compulsory education.

What do we put in its stead? Reliance upon "self-motivated" learning, upon the processes of self-education in freedom through natural association with those who already possess skills and knowledge or who are willing to cooperate in a quest for them. This will be facilitated by four interrelated networks or "learning webs." The first will make accessible to children and students the necessary things and processes (in libraries, museums, theatres, factories and farms); the second will facilitate the exchange of skills among learners; the third is called "peer-matching": persons will advertise their educational needs or interests "in the hope of finding a partner" for mutual advantage; and, finally, diligent use will be

[1] *De-schooling Society*. By IVAN ILLICH. Calder & Boyars, £1.95; Harper & Row, $5.95.

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made of a Yellow Book of self-selected and self-advertised Educators-at-Large who will list their skills and addresses and the price of their services.

THE ONLY THING CLEAR about the operation of these networks is that the government will pay the costs. Left completely vague is the answer to the question: Who will supervise and direct this educational experience and provide for the sequential organisation of subject matters and acquisition of skills without which no discipline can be mastered? Something like the invisible hand that guarantees the harmonious adjustment of the needs of buyers and sellers in the free market is presupposed. But even less than the free market in commodities, the free market in education may not meet genuine and desirable needs while gratifying some that are not so desirable. Some of the proposals for peer-matching are suggestive of the techniques used by genteel and literate prostitutes in arranging assignations through the columns of literary periodicals. Although Illich admits that his networks of learning may be abused, he is convinced that the perils of schooling are far worse because of their restrictions on the freedom of natural self-motivated learners. How the child who is not self-motivated is to learn is left unexplained.

It is not only the school which in Illich's view prevents "personal, creative and autonomous interaction" among learners and teachers but all the major institutions of society: the state, the church, the army, the medical services, the political party, the media, the family as we know it.

> Not only education but society as a whole needs "de-schooling."

One would imagine therefore that before any significant change in education can be effected we would need a total social and cultural revolution. Nonetheless Illich holds that the de-schooling of education can succeed in relative independence of the other equally necessary "de-schoolings."

Despite the extremism of his position Illich writes with an astonishing confidence and dogmatism, piling one questionable statement upon another in reckless disregard of evidence, logic, and common sense.

> Middle class parents commit their children to a teacher's care to keep them from learning what the poor learn on the streets.

But parents—poor ones no less than those of the middle class—usually commit their children to schools and teachers in the hope that they will learn what they can't learn at home or in the street. (Illich seems unaware that a child who is well taught at home is not compelled to attend school.)

> Teachers more often than not obstruct such learning of subject matters as goes on in a school.

In order to know this Illich would have to know how much reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, history, etc. most children learn *without* benefit of any schooling. Since he does not and cannot know this today, his remark simply slanders school teachers whose dedication to their students is no less than his own. Teachers are painted as monsters sadistically exploiting and oppressing children whose "chronological age disqualifies [them] from safeguards which are routine for adults in a modern asylum—madhouse, monastery, or jail." They need the constitutional protection of the First and Fifth Amendments!

Why should all schools, not merely authoritarian ones but those that are avowedly liberal and progressive, be charged with totalitarian oppressiveness? Because they all operate with the idea that "one person's judgment should determine what and when another person must learn." Yet, surely, when the other person is a growing child and not an adult an informed and sympathetic determination of what and when he should learn is no more improper than determining what and when he should eat. What is wrong is the imposition of the same learning (or feeding) schedules on children independently of their special needs and interests. But there is a world of difference between individualising the curriculum and, as Illich proposes, abolishing it.

ACTUALLY IT IS BOTH foolish and cruel to rely for education on the casual, chance encounters of the young. Illich's assurance that the young always learn something from their experiences or become aware of their needs through raw, unstructured experience is not less absurd than his implied view that with respect to health they should be liberated from the ministrations of compulsory medical care. The young are no more always aware of what they need to know in order to grow to their full powers than they are always aware of what to do and what to avoid to achieve health. In either case what they don't know may sometimes cripple them for life. If they waited until they experienced an acute need before learning certain things, they would discover what so many foolish adults have discovered who waited to see a doctor until they had an acute

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need for one, *viz.*, that it was too late or costly to remedy what ailed them.

THE BASIC QUESTION in education, explicitly denied by Illich and other New Left critics, is: "what should individuals learn" in modern society in order more readily to achieve their maximum growth as persons? The basic problem in teaching on every level (except the graduate school) is how to motivate the individual to learn joyfully yet thoroughly what he should learn—as well as what he wants to learn—until he is mature enough to take over the direction of his own education. This, of course, is a gradual process that recognises that each learner has individual needs as well as common needs.

For Illich and those he has influenced, on the other hand, the planning of new educational institutions must start with the question: "What kind of things and people might learners want to be in contact with in order to learn?" A parent who actually lived up to Illich's dictum might well find himself in difficulties with the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (if that worthy group hasn't also been abolished). Children might want to be in contact with anything from live wires and drugs to the glazed ridges of tenement roofs; they may never recover from the effects of learning about them and kindred things. Conversely, they might *not* want to be in contact with children of different races, religions, or nationalities. And yet such experiences of mixing and contact might be necessary to cure them of their prejudices and helpful in avoiding the stereotyped judgments of their elders. On Illich's view, whether anyone learns anything worth-while is purely a matter of chance. On a more sensible view, our world is too dangerous to take such chances.

The flaws in this smart, silly book can be traced to a number of assumptions explicitly made by Illich but also widely held by other romantic critics of the school system who draw back from his extremist remedies. He assumes that because children learn to speak their own language casually without going to school and without explicit instruction, they learn most other things in the same way. To be sure, children have learned to speak and walk without schooling or explicit instruction since the emergence of man from more primitive species, but all human history testifies that they do not learn to read and write as effortlessly. Before compulsory schooling was introduced the vast majority of mankind remained illiterate. Illich holds no brief for illiteracy but he assumes that literacy can be more readily acquired by abolishing schools and relying upon the casual operation of his networks to effect mastery of elementary skills. To claim that we will all learn from and teach one another as need and interest manifest themselves is to invoke pious hope that flies in the face of overwhelming evidence. Not everyone who knows something, even when he knows it well, can teach it, not to mention teach it effectively. Not everyone who is able to teach is willing or in a position to do so. Even speech depends upon the models imitated and can be immensely improved by proper schooling.

Further, some skills are best learned in youth, like writing and arithmetical computation, as well as certain habits of work, and of thoughtfulness for others. Anyone who has seen a grown man, who has been raised in some foreign culture where no ball games were played, writhe as he vainly tries to throw a ball, understands the point. Accidents have been known to happen to persons who never having learned when children to differentiate automatically between left and right paused too long at the shouted advice to turn out of the path of an oncoming car.

Illich "hopes" that education will improve after society is de-schooled. But his conception of "hope" indicates that he has not liberated himself from metaphysical superstition. He sharply contrasts "expectation" with "hope", and downgrades the former because it means "reliance upon results which are planned and controlled by man." Schooling is a form of expectation, since it uses plans and controls, and is therefore bad. Hope "means trusting faith in the goodness of nature." It is interference with nature and human nature that produces evil. Disease presumably is the product of medicine, not the consequence of natural causes. If Illich had the courage of his hope, he would opt for the free market as well as for education free of schools in order to avoid any kind of planning and controlling of the economy.

ILLICH HAS A FLAIR for drawing absurd conclusions from truisms. "We have all learned most of what we know outside the school." From which he infers that schools are therefore unnecessary. But unless the kind of learning is specified, it is just as true to say that most of what we learn outside of school we learn *because* of the skills, knowledge and training we learned in school. Obviously, since formal schooling is comparatively recent, human beings have learned most things, for better or worse, in the course of living. In a

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sense they always will. But having an experience is not *ipso facto* educational. Schooling can make a difference to what we bring to an experience to make it educationally significant. Illich pretends that "schools are designed on the assumption that there is a secret to everything in life" and that only teachers hold the key to it. The truth is that the assumptions of modern schooling are much more modest. They are: that much knowledge and many skills are interesting and useful in helping people cope with their experience and in enhancing the quality of their lives; that they can be learned by systematic schooling more easily than by casual encounters with things and persons or by reliance on "the goodness of nature"; that the acquisition of knowledge and mastery of skills requires a grasp of sequential order in subject matter; that teachers can be helpful in the process of learning until students are in a position intelligently to choose their own patterns of growth.

Illich disputes all this. He claims that schools and teachers prevent children from learning by chaining them to alternating routines of trivial play and drill. According to him we tend to romanticise what we have learned in schools. No one, he claims, really learned how to read in school. We learned outside of school from parents or older siblings or from the boy across the way. He leaves unexplained how, in the U.S.A., entire generations of children of immigrant parents, who could neither speak, read nor write English, learned English more or less adequately. He has read about all the weaknesses of the American public school; but he is ignorant of its achievements.

THE ANIMUS AGAINST school teachers extends to a point where he resents and deplores reliance upon official certification by the state of the capacity to teach or to practice any profession. For all his talk about autonomy and independence and creative rediscovery in education he bemoans the passing of "personal discipleship." The Yellow Book of Educators-at-Large will probably have a special supplement on Gurus. Not unaware of the dangers, he nonetheless would abandon all official restraints or controls on those who hold themselves out to be healers of the sick in mind and body. Their expertise would be determined by popularity polls of students, patients, and clients. "The right to teach any skill"—including surgery and engineering?—"should come under the protection of free speech." For him academic freedom is not the right of *qualified* teachers to be free of ecclesiastical, political, and administrative interference. Academic freedom is a human right; it does not have to be earned. His open society therefore would be an open society for medical and educational quacks without any safeguards for their victims that intellectual scepticism, the by-product of effective teaching, can produce. Never mind the casualties! Of course, schools of medicine, engineering and education today have their casualties, too. But the remedy for poor schools is better schools, not their abolition.

What makes Illich's proposal to abolish schools gratuitously foolish is that some of his suggested webs of learning, with appropriate revisions and safeguards, are in use today as supplementary aids to basic schooling. Compulsory education is an institution, not a process of learning. Students can no more be compelled to learn than to love. Compulsory education expresses the responsibility of society to all its children, especially where parental responsibility is absent. It does not go on forever. By the time students have reached the school-leaving age, they should be in a position to choose freely and intelligently the kind of continuing education, in school or out, they wish to pursue.

THE MEETING OF EXTREMES in politics is an old story. The voice of Bernadette Dohrn and the Weathermen is hardly distinguishable from that of Charles Manson and his Family. In education the mindless Right which opposes public education sounds very much like some factions among the mindless Left. For both the state is always the enemy whose interference with the natural order must be resisted even if it is the order of anarchy. The case in general for compulsory education, not necessarily through one kind of school or any formal school, is even better than the case for compulsory vaccination which in Illich's eyes must also appear as an abridgement of human freedom and a betrayal of hope "in the goodness of nature." In a democratic community the right to learn is a human right. The community owes a responsibility to all children to provide them with the opportunities to develop their powers to make informed and reflective choices not only for the sake of their survival but its own. Under certain circumstances this responsibility may override the rights of parents who are either indifferent or hostile to their children's development.

It is significant that in democratic societies the centres of dissent have usually been the

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schools and the schooled. Nor is it fortuitous that sophisticated apologists of oppressive régimes in the past have been hostile to universal compulsory education out of fear that "the lower classes", having caught glimpses of the great legacies of human culture, would seek to enlarge their share of it. Nothing would please those who are opposed to de-segregation in American education today more than the abolition of compulsory schooling. Like so many other contemporary reactionaries on the new Left, Illich talks a great deal about freedom but neglects the principles of intellectual authority and organisation necessary to negotiate the conflicts of freedoms. The result is that his free society is one in which everyone is free "to do one's thing" no matter if the consequences result, as in all anarchist utopias that rely on the goodness of nature, in the universal loss of hard-won freedoms.

Catching Up from Down Under

Letter from Australia—By MICHAEL BELOFF

HOW TRANSIENT is the concept of the new Australia? Certainly Australia has shed in English eyes its recent image of an ineffably dowdy province, of sun and surf, deserts and dairy farms, suburbs in search of cities, its intellectuals marooned in a wasteland of beaches and tennis courts. That myth survives only as a means of money-making for the émigré satirists of *Oz* and *Private Eye*. Australia's new reputation is as a land of elastic potential, sans strikes, sans tax, sans riots, sans everything, its economy fuelled by a mineral boom and wave upon wave of immigration, its society vigorous, open and free. When I received my invitation from the University of Melbourne Students Union to be the keynote speaker at a two-day forum on "The Social Responsibilities of the University" at the start of the summer term, I reflected wryly that the Oxford Union was currently barely able to afford the expenses of a speaker from London. And the feeling that a different and generous sense of scale obtained in the New World was intensified as England lapsed into an almost mediaeval isolation induced by the protracted postal strike, while my Australian hosts, gaily oblivious of such trivial matters as date-lines and time-changes, bombarded my empty chambers in the Temple (as I later discovered) with midnight telephone calls, and finally bridged the communications gap with multi-folioed telegrams which found their way to me *via* Switzerland.

Perhaps the chief sensation of the visitor to Australia is that it is extraordinary to find it there at all. However one approaches it, one is struck by its insulation, not merely in terms of distance, but in terms of its location in the community of the world. Bombay, Bangkok, Hong Kong, Jakarta, or else Fiji, Honolulu, Mexico City—it makes no difference. Western society is cordoned off, on the one side by the huge Asian landmass with its myriad races—seen through the perspex of a Swissair jet darkly—on the other by the Pacific moat. The traveller may muse about the wonders of the age of exploration and empire. The inhabitant must in logic cultivate his own Australian garden, or, if he seeks neighbours, seek them to the north. It may be that Concorde will repair the damage done to Anglo-Australian relations by the Common Market; and that, as many Australians hope, holiday-makers will venture to Bondi and no longer set their boundaries at Marrakesh, but for the moment it is easy to appreciate why Australia may wish to go it alone, before one ever alights in the country.

THE ENGLISH VISITOR must also judge whither blows the Australian wind by the standards of his own reception. If on the American campus I have been in the past accorded the doubtful courtesies due to the delegate of some old-fashioned but respected culture, I met nothing of the same attitude either on or off the campus in Australia. One is certainly not a Frenchman in St Petersburg; at the best one is an Athenian coming to Sparta. The many personal kindnesses extended to me by my hosts could not disguise the fact that this owed nothing to my Englishness, which rather provided a focus for hostility or defiance, a very deliberate self-assertion. The pull of the mother country is, of course, less strong now that England is turning towards Europe. But for many immigrants England is no longer the

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mother country; and for the children and grandchildren of immigrants of whatever origin Australia is the only land they know. The solid imperial architecture of Sydney's centre is no more characteristic of Australia than are the Greek, Turkish and Italian ghettoes of Melbourne; and both seem less so than the endless sprawl of one-storey houses fringing wide roads with their wooden verandahs in the languid style of the Cowboy West, which encircle the major Australian cities, the cradle of the new generation.

Not Europe, not America, is the magnet today—the fabled "Americanisation of Australia" appears to have been no more than the brief product of the Holt-Johnson friendship. In the Viet Nam War Australia tagged tamely along behind the United States. Now the United States is resiling from its far Eastern commitments; and Australia has anyhow lost her appetite for sharing in such ill-fated ventures. The demonstrations against the War and the resulting conscription have been as assiduous and as relevant as those in America; and while I was at Melbourne yet another massive moratorium was being planned. But on the positive side I was struck by the attention paid by the press to the need for a new China policy; and once President Nixon had followed up the initiative of his ping-pong players with friendly words Australian politicians of all stripes suddenly vied with each other to formulate their own schemes as if a cork had been drawn from a bottle. At the moment Japan is a greater attraction than China—their businessmen talking till dawn on the Qantas night flights. Either way it is clear that Australia will be Australianised, but in an Asian context.

IF IN THE FIELD of foreign policy the national debate reflected Australia's global position, what is notable otherwise is the similarity of issues in Australia and England. This illustrates, firstly, that Australia is becoming for all its wide open spaces an urban society with urban problems and tensions; and secondly, that the old middle-minded conformity is rapidly dissolving. It is no longer eccentric to dissent.

For me the sense of *déjà entendu* was almost eerie. In Australia as in England the racial issue had come to the fore. There was the same heated argument about the invitations extended to the South African rugby and cricket teams; the same threats of demonstrations—which have since materialised; the same discussions in the same pattern. Australia's immigration policy, more overtly colour-conscious than England's, was at last coming under attack. The status of the aborigines was prompting concern; and on campus a campaign against racial discrimination, like the English CARD, was flourishing with only the initials in a different order, and there was already talk in the law faculty of a race relations act.

The liberal conscience has equally acted as a pilot-light to ignite pressure for the reform of the outmoded laws on homosexual behaviour, capital punishment, abortion; and, if in this field the Australian debate lagged a decade behind the British, there is a high degree of identity over the related problems of obscenity and pornography, sexual freedom, and drug-taking. The burgeoning interest in the arts exemplified in the construction of the stylish Victoria Arts Centre in Melbourne or the Opera House in Sydney has stimulated a concomitant interest about the role of art in society, and the freedom that society could allow to art.

More oddly, the questions of pollution and conservation of the environment are also now engaging the public mind. Despite Australia's vast physical size in relation to her population, the concept of "Spaceship Earth" has its vocal disciples. Much of Australia is untamed, even untameable desert—the view from the flight-deck tells one as much. And the fear that disease will strike at the country's agricultural produce was brought home to me by the time it took me to secure approval to bring a half-eaten bar of nut chocolate into the precincts of Melbourne airport. Even in the cities the threats posed by industrial development to civilised living are apparent; Bondi beach was closed by a flood of sewage shortly before I arrived in Sydney. One of the most popular sideshows at Union day in Melbourne was a series of open-air tableaux illustrating pollution problems; and the most popular battle-cry from any speaker was that of Professor Birch of the University of Sydney: "Keep those molecules moving."

THIS SIMILARITY OF ISSUES, this identity of concern extend across a still wider range of subjects—welfare benefits, fines on Trades Unions, student rights—everything that has formed the stuff of public argument in England over the past ten or twelve years. But the political set-up in Australia had a more precise temporal analogy in the English experience. To Australia the year 1971 was clearly what 1963 was to England. The Liberals had been in power since 1949; twenty-two years,

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as opposed to thirteen years, of Conservative rule. In a pre-election year they too had had a leadership *putsch*; and like their Conservative English counterparts had turned not to a younger but to an older man—William McMahon with his long career in government but uncharismatic style being an antipodean model of Sir Alec Douglas-Home. The Labour party under Gough Whitlam was making all the right noises about a new Australia, about using the fruits of material prosperity to create a more just and more compassionate society; and with the aid of his far more impressive Trades Union ally, Bob Hawke, Whitlam was having some success in tapping the vein of Australian desire for a change.

REMEMBERING, AS I DID, the optimism felt on campus in the early 1960s in England, the belief that a change of government was indeed the method by which radical reform was promoted in a democratic society, the sense of urgency and excitement at the very prospects of change itself, I was startled to find so little matching enthusiasm among the young Australians that I met. The embryo politician, devotee of the ward meeting and weekend canvass, was a rare and untypical figure. The notion that orthodox politics—at any rate in the shape of actual Australian politicians—were a vehicle for improvement was a discredited, even frivolous idea. To me it appeared that those young Australians, who wished to transform the society in which they lived, had simply by-passed the stage of recent disillusionment with the compromises and sluggish progress offered by the political parties of the Left—which the reform-minded students of England and America had actually experienced in the Kennedy-Johnson and Wilson eras—and leap-frogged straight from the age of apathy to the age of direct action.

This unique development can, however, be explained in terms of the university system itself. As in England the last decade has been a decade of rapid and massive university expansion. As in England university education, a minority privilege, is a privilege being extended to an ever greater minority. As in England the expansion is taking place, not merely on the older universities, but in the new post-war Plateglass foundations, such as Monash, Macquarie and LaTrobe. Commentators on the new Australia have tended to write about the expansion of higher education

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in a footnote to their main text on the expansion of the economy; but in terms of the social intellectual and political life of Australia it has at least an equal importance. The new generation of Australian students have now the numerical strength to make the expression of their views, whether in words or action, a significant influence on the national policy. The students, at the start of the decade no more than a small interest group, are now a weighty estate of the realm.

Thus the context, national politics apart, was ripe for the creation of a radical student movement; and distance provided no barrier to the spread of the bacillus of student dissent. Viewed historically, until 1966 (a year of federal elections) such radical activity as there was on the Australian campus, took the traditional guise of the formation of pressure groups, lobbying, speech-making. After 1966 with the example first of Berkeley, then of Berlin, L.S.E. and the Sorbonne, and the provocation of the active Government support for President Johnson's Viet Nam policy, young Australians took to the streets and the Vice Chancellors' offices —those twin fora of the new radicalism. From 1968 onwards such phenomena as sit-ins, walk-outs, "student power" campaigns, and experimental "Free Universities" became an accepted part of the Australian academic scene.

THE FUNCTION TO WHICH I was invited was both a reflection of and a reaction against the new-style student radicalism. It was organised by the Students Union itself, not by a chapter of the SDS; and it had the blessing of the faculty, indeed its cooperation. For a day-and-a-half the University, a few die-hard scholars apart, suspended all its formal teaching activities and participated in the enterprise. What was its purpose?

In the words of *Farrago,* the student newspaper:

> Union Day has a philosophy. It aims to show clearly that the university experience means a good deal more than elegant English, the miracles of modern medicine, scrupulous science, and the letter of the Law—or whatever. University activities have a much wider educational, cultural and political significance, whether one looks at particular departments or at the organic complex of departments, students, intellectuals, administration and assorted paraphernalia. Such thoughts should bother us—to the extent of asking "Well, why the hell am I here anyway?" Union day is an attempt to pose that question and many others.

Answers were sought in a variety of ways. I spoke on the first evening. On the next morning there was a debate on the politicisation of the university with both staff and students on the paper. At lunch-time I and three academics (Professors of Philosophy, Medicine, and Biological Sciences from various universities) spoke on the social responsibilities of our various disciplines. After that there were seven talks on social responsibility in more specialised areas; environment; humanities; social sciences; biological sciences; technology; physical sciences; and the professions. And after that the groups, split into fifty sub-groups, analysing such diverse issues as "Man's evolutionary History . . . Aggression, Altruism, and Restraint . . . Drugs and their Impact on Society . . . Implications of Nuclear Power Development in Australia . . . Medicine & World Population. . . . Philosophy and Pop Culture . . . Poetry in Extremist Situations . . . Consumer Protection . . . Law and Aesthetic Judgment. . . ." Films, yoga demonstrations, mock trials, art exhibitions, netball training, and wine and cheese parties were on offer for the less committed. The meeting culminated in a general evening forum. Out of a university population of some 15,000, approximately 2,000 cared enough to come.

In my opening address I tried to analyse three distinct attitudes towards the social responsibilities of the university; that which regarded the university as a place for the cultivation of the intellect and the pursuit of pure scholarship; that which regarded it as a powerhouse for change, directly by the use of knowledge and reason for the solution of social problems, and, indirectly, through its impact on social mobility; and that which regarded it as an arena for political action at the least, at the most as a laboratory for the techniques of revolution. University Consciousness I; University Consciousness II; and University Consciousness III. I myself acted as an advocate of University Consciousness II, which I argued to be both inevitable and desirable in the age of the public university.

It became rapidly clear from my reception that this brand of reformism was indistinguishable in the minds of the majority of the audience from a careless apathy. For them the University was inextricably linked to a "corrupt social system." The University should speak with a "collective voice" on the great issues of the day; and its language should be that of opposition to the established society. This view was propounded with conviction and no little personal heat, so much so that when I finally drew my remarks to a close after some two hours, and was escorted to my room across the

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campus, I was privileged to hear one of my audience exhort her boyfriend not to bid goodnight to the "Enemy."

My experience the next day was the same. I suggested that the role of the lawyer in modern society was to work for an extension of justice for all; to appreciate law as a social service, and in the exercise of his civic duties with the aid of his professional expertise to fight for a public legal service, and for laws to protect less powerful groups, be they consumers, employees, racial minorities or tenants. But I emphasised that in his practice a lawyer was bound to act on instructions, as the mouthpiece of his client, to represent whosoever sought his services, and always to work for the upholding of the framework of the law and within it. Once again this viewpoint, extreme no doubt from the point of view of the legal profession, was far too "conservative" for the audience, whose questions indicated that in their opinion it was the duty of lawyers not so much to change, as to break unjust laws.

Finally, in the evening finale I found myself in the position of a defender of the liberal-democratic tradition against the powerful Marxist onslaught of Professor Brian Medlin of the Flinders University, who had come straight from prison, where he had been placed for his refusal to pay a fine for an alleged assault on the police, and was dignified with the martyr's garb of blue-denim suit and monkish tonsure.

The details of the dialectic of these twenty-four hours is unimportant. Those vaguely familiar with the writings of Dutschke, Blackburn, Ali, or Cohn-Bendit would have learned nothing new. What is interesting is that, were it not for the weather and the accents, the argument might have been conducted on any modern university campus in the West. Not merely were the ideas part of the standard tradition of student radicalism of the last decade. The style of discussion, the bearing, behaviour, above all perhaps the clothes of the dissenters was equally in the conformist mainstream of the international movement. At the end of the day I felt myself as isolated on the so-called conservative wing, as in my tour of American universities six or seven years earlier—on the eve of the Berkeley uprising—I found myself isolated on the radical wing; and was compelled to observe that the nature and composition of the permanent participants at the meeting had wholly unbalanced the debate if one placed it in the national context, for they had accepted as unchallengeable truths what the majority of society had rejected as utopian lies.

THE CONCLUSION THAT I draw from this brief experience—fortified by a taste of underground subculture in the unlikely surroundings of Macquarie University in the bush outside Sydney—is that the version propounded by commentators on new Australia is defective in that it misses one essential ingredient. There is no doubt that many Australians enjoy the vision of a not-too-distant future when their country takes a major place among the nations of the world; when its vast natural resources are exploited to the full; when its population increases in a geometric progression; when its leadership has the skill and drive to establish a Pacific role; when the philosophy of the New Frontier is put into practice in the land of the Last Old Frontier; and that it is in this way that the new Australia will emerge from the carcase of the old.

It seems to me, however, that a significant proportion of Australian youth have rejected this vision in its entirety; and have turned away from the attractions of materialism and political power. They would prefer an Australia limited in population, anxious to conserve what it has, neutralist and accommodating to its Asian rivals; egalitarian not merely in its social style but in its treatment of its citizens in terms of the measurable rewards of money and power. As in England or in the United States this may be an ephemeral phenomenon. But it would not be absurd or irrelevant to hypothesise about "the greening of Australia."

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Homage to Synge

By Laurence Lerner

THE STORY of Yeats finding Synge in Paris and telling him to go back to Ireland has become one of the significant moments of modern literature. "Give up Paris," Yeats said. "You will never create anything by reading Racine. . . . Go to the Aran Islands. Live there as if you were one of the people themselves; express a life that has never found expression."

Or that's what Yeats said he said. Scholarship has arrived and tells us (as it always does) that the story as Yeats told it is not quite accurate (as such stories never are). But it doesn't matter whether Yeats said it then, or later, or not at all, transposing what Synge did into what he told him to do. What matters is that Synge did it. For most of the 1890s he lived in France and Germany, soaking up a European culture that stretched from Dante and Petrarch to Villiers de l'Isle Adam. He wrote a series of poems joined together by a vaguely autobiographical narrative, the *Vita Vecchia*, something between a pastiche and a parody of Dante, and a piece of decadent and dreamy self-analysis, *Étude Morbide*, which he later, and rightly, came to detest. He also, on one of his regular returns to Dublin, wrote a piece about being operated on, "Under Ether", in which a cool ironic ear and eye are brought to bear on the crazy material (progress in anaesthetics has robbed literature of one splendid subject at least):

> "I'm an initiated mystic," I yelled with fury; "I could rend the groundwork of your souls."
>
> Not wishing to exasperate me they grew serious. "Ha, ha, ha!" I roared in ironical triumph, "now you're serious. Now you know what you have to deal with."

There was always a realist in Synge, but he had to go to Dublin to bring it out.

Then in 1898 he went to the Aran Islands. It took five years and three more visits to the islands before he finally gave up Paris, but the change, though slow, was decisive. From now on he wrote only on Irish subjects, developing for his plays a poetic-colloquial style based on the brogue; he helped found the Abbey Theatre; and when he died in 1909 he was on the way to becoming—perhaps had become—Ireland's greatest modern dramatist.

The great literary discovery he made among the country people was their speech. He liked to suggest that in a way his plays had written themselves, that he was simply a tape recorder capturing the superb poetic quality of Irish dialect:

> When I was writing *The Shadow of the Glen*, some years ago, I got more aid than any learning could have given me from a chink in the floor of the old Wicklow house where I was staying, that let me hear what was being said by the servant girls in the kitchen.

That was what Synge left the *Bibliothèque Nationale* for—to acquire a dramatic language by eavesdropping. He generalised his practice into a theory of when great drama is and isn't possible. What it needs is a country "where the imagination of the people, and the language they use, is rich and living"; and Synge is sure that in Elizabethan England "striking and beautiful phrases were as ready to the story-teller's or the playwright's hand as the rich cloaks and dresses of his time." We all like social theories of literature, and this one is as attractive as any: that it is the rich texture of slang in Elizabethan England and in Synge's Ireland that made true dramatic language possible—perhaps inevitable. If we think of the language of Racine and its total lack of contact with popular idiom, we can see why the decision to leave Paris was so important for Synge, and made him a writer—a writer in the line of Shakespeare and Jonson, those wonderful pillagers of the spoken language.

OF COURSE LIKE ALL SUCH THEORIES, it turns out, when we push it, not to be saying very

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much. Suppose we take an age that produced no great drama, or nothing but the literary drama of a Racine: can we know why? Because no genius happened to survive infant mortality? Because literary theory drove the dramatists to look elsewhere for their language? Or because—as Synge would have it—popular speech wasn't rich enough? The hypothesis is gorgeously untestable. But after all it isn't a sociologist's theory, but a dramatist's: what matters is not its verification but its use, and it was clearly of great use to Synge to believe that he was writing these almost anonymous plays.

And was he? If we turn to the plays, and ask if this is what they seem like, the best example is certainly *Riders to the Sea.* Many have remarked how powerfully impersonal this play is. It is common to compare it to Greek tragedy, but there are few Greek tragedies where the protagonists are so totally passive as here. An old woman has lost her husband and five of her sons through drowning: in the course of the play they learn that the body of the fifth has been found, and the sixth and last is drowned too. The women keen, and accept their fate: "No man at all can be living for ever, and we must be satisfied." The Greek tragic protagonist may be the victim of the Gods but the whole process is worked out through his character and what he is forced into doing; whereas old Maurya simply had her suffering imposed on her. There aren't even any gods in Synge's play, only the sea: it is merely the restlessness of critics that finds in it references to Poseidon or the death of Hippolytus. Synge set out to chronicle a suffering so elemental that its touches of Christianity are cursory and its paganism rudimentary. All it has are simple superstitions, basic emotions, and the dignity of its language on which rests the moving dignity of the drama.

The Shadow of the Glen, Synge's other one-act play, is based on a tale he heard on Aran of how a man pretended to be dead in order to trap his adulterous wife. It is told with marvellous bluntness in his book, *The Aran Islands,* the bluntness of the storyteller whose interest lies in the mere fact of the situation, and who gets his effect by not probing the characters' motives. In the play, Synge probes. The wife, Nora Burke, is restless and imaginative, despising her husband and (as the action proceeds) her lover: she has become so central that J. B. Yeats saw it all as "a very effective attack on loveless marriages." Synge was not attacking anything: he never attacked. But he was concerned to show the feelings of

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the "bad wife", and he added a new dimension to the tale by giving it an ending. The tramp who has come in for shelter and seen the whole adventure invites Nora to go off with him at the end, and she does, for her husband has thrown her out and the tramp has "a fine bit of talk"—leaving husband and lover to their sip of whisky and the pleasures of a quiet life.

That fine bit of talk, about "the herons crying out over the black lakes . . . and the larks and the big thrushes when the days are warm", appears in almost every play of Synge's. It is a dream of idyllic love, of waking together in the woods, and it has a central place in his imagination. It is as if the move from Paris to Ireland brought emotional regression and, through that, artistic enrichment. His dreams had been the corrupt sophisticated dreams of the French Decadents, now they were the simple idyll of young love, and it was out of this he could make art. As we look through the five plays that followed *Riders to the Sea,* we can see him experimenting with various ways of handling the idyll, of distancing it, and giving it a place in a complex dramatic whole. In *The Tinker's Wedding* he uses farce. The simple uproarious story tells how the tinker's woman, Sarah Casey, takes it into her head to get married, to the astonishment of her man and the amazed scorn of his mother, Mary Byrne, a terrible old woman who pawns everything for drink, a huge comic figure in the line of Falstaff and Ben Jonson's Ursula. Synge makes her into the mouthpiece of the idyll. It is she who tells us, after she has tied the priest into a sack, that tinkers have no need of "the likes of him" to help them to a wild freedom in which marriage is an irrelevance.

In *The Well of the Saints* (how I would love to see this gem produced) he once again showed the lure of freedom from convention, linking it this time with blindness. The story is pure folk-tale: a blind old beggar couple have their sight restored by a passing saint, find they were better off blind, lose their sight again, and refuse the chance of a second cure. Blindness, it turns out, is a way of keeping the imagination free. Only when secure in their blindness ("for the seeing is a queer lot, and you'd never know the thing they'd do") can they really enjoy the sun and the sweetness in the air, secure from jealousies, quarrels and their own meannesses.

Deirdre of the Sorrows, which Synge was still working on when he died, is more conventionally romantic than the other plays. It exploits the obviously poetic qualities of Irish speech with less counterbalancing irony: the effect of hearing blind old Martin Doul rejoicing that he can sit with his old hag of a wife and hear "the birds and bees humming in every weed of the ditch" is clearly different from (and in one sense more complex than) hearing the same eloquence from Deirdre and Naisi, the great romantic lovers of Irish mythology. *Deirdre* is streaked with colloquialisms that add to its power without ever quite destroying the romantic atmosphere; and what is perhaps its most original touch is pure romance. When he has to offer a reason for Deirdre's decision to leave the idyllic life with Naisi and return to what she almost knows is a trap, he rejects all the various explanations the sources offered, and attributes it simply to the lovers' fear that they may grow tired of each other. This seems a clear trace of Synge's own obsession with the fading of the idyllic dream; and as drama it is one of those psychological implausibilities that ring truer than a well-wrought plot. *Deirdre* is a fine play, if in the end less adult than the others.

AS WE PUT THESE PLAYS TOGETHER and ask what they have in common, we can see that Synge was not nearly such an objective writer as he sometimes claimed. The Abbey productions were meticulously accurate, and a brochure put out by the company, which described them as "Folk Plays", claimed "forasmuch as these plays are portions of Irish life, so are they put upon the stage with a care and accuracy of detail that has hardly been attempted before." This is half the truth, but accuracy alone does not make for great drama; and notes like this conceal the personal involvement that informs Synge's work. The paradox of this work is that his highly distinctive language, which might seem the badge of personality, is the most impersonal element; even if, as some claim, it is further from Irish speech than he admitted, the transformations he made are still those of conscious art, not the result of obsessions. The obsessions appear in the themes.

And especially in the theme which I have labelled the idyllic. The romance of opting out of respectable society is now, of course, a highly topical theme; and in one of his essays Synge makes it explicit in a passage which Robin Skelton compares with the hippies:

> The slave and beggar are wiser than the man who works for recompense, for all our moments are divine and above all price though their sacrifice is paid with a measure of fine gold. Every industrious worker has sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, perhaps served him in chalices of gold.

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Hippy? The traditional language—biblical and (interestingly) uncolloquial—is not that of the modern young; but perhaps this makes the similarity of theme all the more noteworthy. Synge would make an interesting addition to the varied Pantheon of Hippiedom.

Or would he? It is a commonplace that the finest literature cannot be reduced to its themes; and his excellence as a dramatist does not consist in his adherence to the view that, as he puts it, "man is naturally a nomad", but to the complexity and resonance with which he handles it. This is true of all the plays mentioned; and above all it is true of his masterpiece, *The Playboy of the Western World*. Perhaps alone of his plays, it has a real, complex plot, of great psychological interest; and it shows with insight how the ordinary life of a small Mayo village is transfigured by a lie that gives scope to the imagination. Christy Mahon, the young lad on the run from the "polis" because he has killed his father, becomes the idol of the village, and wins everything at the local sports. We see a double transformation: the admiration Christy gets turns him from a trembling coward into a hero, with two fine women fighting for him; and the blarney he then develops lights up the life of the barmaid who falls in love with him. It is Irish kitchen comedy touched by the magic of its language, and best played in a drab setting so that the fancy speeches can stand out in all their ridiculous splendour. For the more extravagant, even absurd, Christy's swaggering grows, the more splendid his language. Synge himself was well aware of this ambivalence, and the best comment on the play is his own: "although parts of it are, or are meant to be, extravagant comedy, still a great deal more that is behind it, is perfectly serious when looked at in a certain light." He goes on to say that this is true of much comedy, citing Shylock and Alceste—"no one is quite sure today if they should be played seriously or not." We could add Don Quixote, or Falstaff, or Epicure Mammon, the great gallery of ambivalent comic heroes to which Christy Mahon belongs.

Right at the end of his life Synge prepared his handful of poems and translations for publication. He is really a better and more important poet than his tiny output would suggest (especially if we accept Mr Skelton's interesting suggestion that his influence was decisive in turning Yeats from faeryland to the tough modernism that begins to appear in *The Green Helmet*). As well as a few superb lyrics, the volume included a *Preface* one page

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long—one of those superb *obiter scripta* that a creative writer can sometimes bring to the surface from a lifetime of meditating on his art. (Though much longer, Arthur Miller's Introduction to his *Collected Plays* seems to me another: the brilliant reflections of a man who usually keeps his thoughts to himself.) Synge's *Preface* shows the same concern as his plays, to combine lyricism and reality by drawing on the real language of men when that language is rich enough, and so to produce a verse that will be "read by strong men, and thieves, and deacons, not by little cliques only."

> In these days poetry is usually a flower of evil or good; but it is the timber of poetry that wears most surely, and there is no timber that has not strong roots among the clay and worms.

Synge the minor poet dismissing Baudelaire the great poet. It seems to me one of the paradoxes of criticism that we should be able to remember which poet is which, while at the same time feeling that his attack is perfectly just.

ALL THIS BEGAN a hundred years ago: like Proust and the Paris Commune, Synge had his centenary in 1971. What has it produced? More homage than discussion, on the whole. Trinity College, Dublin, arranged an exhibition of his manuscripts for tourists to glance at on their way to the Book of Kells (manuscripts is not quite the word, since Synge always used a typewriter, which makes the exhibits more legible, even if it robs them of atmosphere). The Dolmen Press has published the catalogue of this exhibition,[1] as well as two sumptuous slender volumes, one of his translations from Petrarch,[2] the other of his photographs.[3] The translations—from melodious Italian verse to a rhythmic prose like that of *Deirdre*—are yet another bridge between the world Synge left and the world he went to. You can get them in six pages of the Everyman edition, but those who like fine books will, if they buy this edition, get five extra sonnets for their money, the Italian originals, medallion portraits of the two poets, and a fine bit of printing. It is hard to imagine, however, who is going to pay £5 for the mild documentary interest of Synge's photographs, even though the volume contains one superb picture (of his elderly cousin, Mary Synge) and a photograph of Synge's camera (to put next to that of his typewriter in the Trinity catalogue).

ROBIN SKELTON has had a real bonanza, contributing three books to the centenary—a critical study,[4] a popular illustrated biography,[5] and a poem.[6] (Ought there not to be a rule, limiting each critic to one book per author?) The biography is for those who know little about Synge, and is well-written, with well-chosen quotations, though it too makes its contribution to the wallet of unwanted photographs (J. M. Synge aged one was perhaps inevitable; but we might have been spared Synge's student cards, the bill for his violin lessons, and yet another picture of that typewriter). The poem is not Robin Skelton at his best, as acts of homage by poet-scholars so seldom are: the combination of conscientiousness and speculation is too awkward. The critical book is full of good sense, but too thorough and too inward-looking ever to take fire: its careful awarding of praise and blame for Synge's textual revisions seems to underline the provinciality of a dramatist who could, after all, be set in a European context (*The Well of the Saints* his *Iceman Cometh*, the unpublished, fascinating *Luasnad, Cap and Laine* his *Endgame*)—the European context he rejoined by apparently deserting it.

Since Synge's decision to be Irish was the turning point of his life, we might conclude with some remarks on his relationship with Irish nationalism. Mr Skelton's biography suggests such reflections, and anyway they seem appropriate to a centenary, a good occasion to relate a writer to the world that was changing around him. These relations, in Synge's case, were always uneasy and sometimes disastrous. Everyone knows about the riots when the Abbey Theatre produced *The Playboy;* the pious and the nationalistic were always accusing him of insulting the church, or Irish womanhood. *The Tinker's Wedding* was not produced in Dublin in his lifetime for fear it would give offence (I produced it with students in Belfast in 1953, and we never found out whether that was the first production in Ireland).

Nationalist movements throw up fine

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[1] *The Synge Manuscripts in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin: a Catalogue.* Dolmen Press, 50p.
[2] *Some Sonnets from "Laura in Death", after Petrarch.* By J. M. SYNGE. Dolmen Press, £3.
[3] *My Wallet of Photographs.* By J. M. SYNGE. Dolmen Press, £5.
[4] *The Writings of J. M. Synge.* By ROBIN SKELTON. Thames and Hudson, £2.25.
[5] *J. M. Synge and his World.* By ROBIN SKELTON. Thames and Hudson, £1.75.
[6] *Remembering Synge.* By ROBIN SKELTON. Dolmen Press, 50p.

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writers, of that there is no doubt: the marvellous literature of early 20th-century Ireland is unimaginable without Irish Nationalism. They throw them up, but then they try and knock them down: for to ask of any writer that he must first and foremost be an Aryan, an Irishman, or a Black, is to tell him not to be a writer. To identify yourself with a popular movement is usually to hang shackles on your imagination. And in these days, when we are told on all sides that true art is revolutionary and subversive and the enemy of authority, it should give us pause to remember that the police were called to the Abbey Theatre to give a great dramatist a hearing against the yells of popular frenzy.

King Offa Alive and Dead

Ten Poets—By DOUGLAS DUNN

WITH THE PUBLICATION of *Winter Trees*,[1] Sylvia Plath's books come to an end. Faber announce that there will be a *Collected Poems* in 1973, which will also include poems so far uncollected—one example I know of is "Amnesiac", published in the *New Yorker* in 1963, and there are indications from other quarters of poems as yet uncollected or unpublished.[2]

What Sylvia Plath's readers must now marvel at is the sheer quantity of the work she produced before her death at the age of thirty —and work, moreover, which is remarkably consistent in quality. *Winter Trees*, the new volume, includes "Three Women", a "Poem for Three Voices" which contains such dramatically moving lines as these, near the end of the poem:

Hot noon in the meadows. The buttercups
Swelter and melt, and the lovers
Pass by, pass by.
They are black and flat as shadows.
It is so beautiful to have no attachments!
I am solitary as grass. What is it I miss?
Shall I ever find it, whatever it is?

The swans are gone. Still the river
Remembers how white they were.
It strives after them with its lights.
It finds their shapes in a cloud.
What is that bird that cries
With such sorrow in its voice?
I am young as ever, it says. What is it I miss?

Ted Hughes suggests in a note that "Three Women" can be seen "as a bridge between *The Colossus* and *Ariel*, both in the change of style from the first half to the last and in that it was written to be read aloud." Presumably written in 1961-1962, "Three Women" is earlier than the other poems in the book, which were written in the last nine months of her life, and were part of "the batch from which the *Ariel* poems were more or less arbitrarily chosen."

The tone of the poems is generally strident, accusatory, and violent:

The womb
Rattles its pod . . . . *("Childless Woman")*

A squeal of brakes.
Or is it a birth cry? *("Stopped Dead")*

Viciousness in the kitchen!
The potatoes hiss. *("Lesbos")*

The tenderness of her despair is expressed in "Child" or "By Candlelight"; elsewhere, the mood is that unique, peculiarly savage elegiac exclamation, questioning, triumphantly inventive, and yet, though the mood embodies an almost staggering sense of hurt or grievance, the exact specification of why that should be is never yielded. It is the mood—collectively, of all the poems—that is so impressive; this generalisation of experience deflects the reader from the autobiographical data behind the poems, the reasons why they were written. Life is absorbed into Art, yet remains active in the poems, raw and enigmatical.

GEOFFREY GRIGSON'S late flowering[3] (to put it Georgianly) is one of the most pleasing things in contemporary poetry. His imagery is bright, his rhythms marked, the poems enhanced by his contact with nature; there are also devastatingly satirical pieces. An overtly elegiac or nostalgic tone dominates his new collection; but it is the unsentimental back-

[1] *Winter Trees*. By SYLVIA PLATH. Faber, £1.
[2] The Rainbow Press inform us that in 1972 they will be publishing the remaining later poems (including "Amnesiac") in a limited edition, prior to their inclusion in the *Collected Poems*.
[3] *Discoveries of Bones and Stones*. By GEOFFREY GRIGSON. Macmillan, £1.50.

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ward glancing and recollection of a poet aware of the dangers involved.

Grigson's is a poetry of the precise moment, the "feeling" caught in a web of images drawn from the physical surroundings of the poet at the time, even at the time of writing. It is a poetry of aptness, the right rhythm, the right word—the poet's age, the season, his state of mind, a preoccupation: his art is to bring them all together in a state of rest, a formal and expressive coexistence. It comes as no surprise to see him write in an introductory note: "I think the best poems are immediacy, in the tinted amber of their medium—a matter of trope, rhythm, vision, surprise, illumination, darkening, release, rest, assurance."

There is a dilemma in Grigson's poetry which he recognises as current among other contemporary artists as well. He specifies it as a "temptation to looseness", the wish to indulge in vigour of manner, resulting in a sacrifice of accuracy or truth of perception, and he sees this as an unacceptable way out of present difficulties. In "Perhaps So", he peevishly dismisses: "Too much is remembered . . ."; "It is time for less to be printed . . ."; and, in a witty stanza:

Too much is told. Banish polymath Steiners
And seventy-seven other British Shiners,
Naturalists, archaeologists, publishers
Of publications in parts,
Norman Mailer
And all long-winded farts . . .

All this seems to indicate that Mr Grigson wants to get back to a gay, spontaneous, Dionysian kind of life, in which more is spent, as he says, facetiously, "on sherbet, and on the quick/Transience of Roman candles and rockets." This anti-intellectual trend in the poem is either a deliberate con, or confusion. The Steiners, Shiners and long-winded farts are banished

To an artificial, not too get-at-able
Or too satellite isle,
At least for a while,
Beyond the blind side of the Moon,
And for our health and your Muses' health,
O strictest Apollo, may it be soon.

It is surprising enough that the austere, not to say cantankerous, and sometimes pompous, Grigson should indulge in such whimsical speculation; but the turn of the poem to a final invocation of Apollo is, given the dismissal of "culture" in the earlier stanzas, even more surprising. Apollo would blush at the eccentric wiggle of his disciple's metrics in "It So Occurred", or "Haircut of Him."

Yet Grigson's is clearly an art of discernment, which *is* the art of strict Apollo. In the poem to Auden:

if I could
I would now wholly, without
Afterthoughts, or those thoughts
You write of (but alone
In the margin) which come when
We elderly wake in the night,
Say, by your rhythm,
I am glad to be living.
What is grace all the same
Which I, but less strongly,
Discern, you proclaim.

That is the difference between Apollo and Dionysus: discernment and proclamation. Mr Grigson acknowledges what he has not got; but what he does have he uses splendidly.

IT COMES AS A MILD SHOCK to realise that Norman MacCaig is not much younger than Auden. In 1930 MacCaig would have been twenty. What happened to the poems of his twenties, in that era when talents grew so quickly? His new *Selected Poems*[4] (and how welcome this book is) starts with *Riding Lights*, the volume published in 1955. Before that, MacCaig contributed to *The New Apocalypse* and *The White Horseman*—that fact in itself indicates the kind of poems he wrote then—and there were two volumes after that, *Far Cry* (1943) and *The Inward Eye* (1946). His rejection of the lavish verbalism of the 'forties was complete; in his nine years' silence his writing matured into the elaborated observation, wit and mental dexterity for which he is now known, a development parallelling the trend in English poetry as represented by The Movement. Yet MacCaig remained something of an exotic, even if a peculiarly Scottish one; as an epistemologist in the Highlands (a characteristic setting) he sometimes appears as a Harry Lauder among the philosophers. His powers of observation free the writing from the limitations that metaphysicising usually impose, although it is wrong to hang on to the sensuous visual quality of his word-pictures as if nothing else happened in his poems. However, it is the sameness of method that can be criticised. MacCaig is a "noticing mind", and from what he observes he tries to make generalisations that expand to as wide an inclusiveness as possible. The classic illustration is perhaps the poem "Half-built Boat in a Hayfield." Here the terms of the description, and the nature of the activity

[4] *Selected Poems.* By NORMAN MACCAIG. Chatto, £1.50.

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described, enlarge the poem into a statement on the processes of creation, without any sacrifice of poetic feeling or mystery.

A cradle, at a distance, of a kind:
Or, making midget its neat pastoral scene,
A carcass rotted and its bones picked clean.

Rye-grass was silk and sea, whose rippling was
Too suave to rock it. Solid in the sun,
Its stiff ribs ached for voyages not begun.

The gathering word was not completed yet.
The litter of its own genesis lay around,
Sunk in the bearded sea, or on the ground.

As though evolving brilliances could show
In their first utterances what would end as one
Continuous proclamation of a sun.

Only when these clawed timbers could enclose
Their own completing darkness would they be
Phoenixed from it and phoenixed into She.

And fit then as such noticing reveals,
To split her first wave open and explore
The many ways that all lead to one shore.

Religious suggestions, images of birth and death drawn out of the appearance of the boat, the grass transformed into sea; it does seem politely absurd to elaborate so much—and suggest much more—from commonplace observation. Yet it works. MacCaig's "noticing mind", as well as "eye", enables him to make these startling leaps without the process seeming forced.

In his later poems MacCaig has adopted free verse, but not, I think, with any great success. More successful are the formal poems in his collection *A Man in My Position*, poems such as "Structures", or "Green Stain", but especially that perfect short poem "So Many Summers", which is less concerned to say the teasingly difficult thing, or make surprising leaps, or coax out conceits. Above all, personal experience is involved to a greater extent than is generally the case.

VERNON SCANNELL'S *Selected Poems*[5] is also welcome, although, viewed in quantity, his poems reveal the monotony of rhythm common in post-modernist poets upholding nineteenth-century metrics. Effortful blank verse, quatrains, moralised narratives and monologues occasionally rhymed—Mr Scannell has a wide enough range to sustain interest in a volume of this length; although his subjects are limited to variations on marriage and war, both are large enough to be going on with. But his cadences are deaden-

[5] *Selected Poems.* By VERNON SCANNELL. Allison & Busby, £1.25.

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ingly iambic, and the main interest is supplied by story-telling. There are some good local effects:

The evening brings
A smoky sadness to the mortgaged lawns,

which, despite its derivation from Eliot of the *Preludes*, goes some way towards compensating for the tiredness of rhyme and language in a poem like "Silver Wedding", with phrases like "A black wind grieves", and "Youth's ebullient song."

War is a recurrent obsession, cropping up in metaphors in poems about something else. Scannell has a claim to be considered among the best of the British Second World War poets. He had direct experience of the fighting, and although this is a substantial presence in *Selected Poems*, it is only because the two poems drawing from this experience are his best. The real thing comes across unmistakably in "Walking Wounded", where the plight of the unspectacularly hurt is ominously dramatised.

They were not magnified by noble wounds,
There was no splendour in that company.
And yet, remembering after eighteen years,
In the heart's throat a sour sadness stirs;
Imagination pauses and returns
To see them walking still, but multiplied
In thousands now. And when heroic corpses
Turn slowly in their decorated sleep
And every ambulance has disappeared
The walking wounded still trudge down that lane,
And when recalled they must bear arms again.

IN *MERCIAN HYMNS*,[6] Geoffrey Hill shifts his icons of past and present through a timeless England—in particular, the Midlands—the landscape of which is beautifully described.

Heathland, new-made watermeadow. Charlock, marsh-marigold. Crepitant oak forest where the boar furrowed black mould, his snout intimate with worms and leaves.

In a paragraph that precedes his long list of annotations, Hill suggests that the central character of the thirty "Hymns"—Offa—"might perhaps most usefully be regarded as the presiding genius of the West Midlands." This single figure is used as the prop around which to accumulate the sequence and also unify it, much in the manner of Ted Hughes' *Crow*, although it goes without saying that Hill's language is altogether more lapidary, and the emotional temper a great deal less hot.

Offa was the greatest of all the Anglo-Saxon kings with the obvious exception of Alfred. As the timeless "presiding genius" he is at once "King of the perennial holly-groves, the riven sandstone" and "overlord of the M5", as well as his historical self, "the friend of Charlemagne." Hill postulates a mysterious antithesis between the mundane realities of contemporary England and "the elves' wergild, the true governance of England, the gaunt warrior-gospel armoured in engraved stone." To those who cannot take this seriously, *Mercian Hymns* will seem a mish-mash of Dark Age Mercia and the contemporary Midlands; history transposed to the present, expressing an elevated notion of "continuities" or "the past in the present." Hill says, "The indication of such a timespan will, I trust, explain and to some extent justify a number of anachronisms," which seems to be a mandarin joke; as, for example, in Hymn XXVII, "The Death of Offa":

"Now when King Offa was alive and dead," they were all there, the funereal gleeman: papal legate and rural dean; Merovingian car-dealers, Welsh mercenaries; a shuffle of house-carls.

Spot the anachronism. There is a note to explain the ritual phrase with which that Hymn opens. In fact, there are many scrupulous (sometimes pedantic) notes to prove to us Mr Hill is well read in English history.

These poems are a scholarly confrontation with the mysteries of time and England, rooted in firm qualities of observation, polished statements, a bookish lyricism which, while capable of affecting the reader's feelings, is more likely to appeal to the intellect. However, there is real sensed experience, and evidence of Hill's temperament in

Gran lit the gas, his dice whirred in the ludo-cup, he entered into the last dream of Offa the King.

Impressively written, poetically learned, cleanly observed when it deals with realities, and beautifully imagined when it does not. What else can one say? The qualification—that the book's conception of history is suspect—might not be important; the *Hymns* can arguably stand as an imaginative work, as if there had never been a real Offa. Or, if the book does "argue" a conception of history, and if its argument fails to persuade, what of the poetry, the hardness of language, the splendidly evocative descriptions?

Tumult recedes as though into the long rain. Groves of legendary holly; silverdark the ridged gleam.

[6] *Mercian Hymns*. By GEOFFREY HILL. André Deutsch, £1.

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But what really proves the quality of Mr Hill's writing is that the prose movement of the *Hymns* does carry the burden of their own artfulness, puns, niceties of etymology; and if they often seem like arcana "written in stone" and discovered under the "barbaric ivy", then at least we know they'll be there tomorrow when we try again to understand the many ironies which the *Hymns* imply—and Mr Hill's methods obscure.

ANGLO-SAXONISM is Harold Massingham's fixation as well. There has been a remarkable Anglo-Saxon revival in twentieth-century English poetry—Auden, Ted Hughes, Massingham, and there is something of it in Sylvia Plath. It seems like the English version of *furor Celticus*. Mr Massingham's new book *Frost-Gods*[7] contains three more or less direct translations from Old English and thirteen translated "Riddles". A tendency to the explosive, snarling and firmly wrought utterance of Old English poetry is quite marked in his own original verse:

An air-berg's exploded!
All's
Frost-flak over these collieries, this stubbled
corn.

Exclamatory, guttural music may be acceptable as a traditional alternative to the more civilised sounds of iambic numbers. What is sometimes reprehensible about it is the "more-masculine-than-thou" attitude of the language, the husky vowels and battle-weary alliteration. It's a typical he-man Northern attitude—shouting (Massingham *et al.*) when he is not swearing or being perfectly frank and honest (Tony Harrison).

Philological in-fighting, word-vigour—as the blurb calls it: Mr Massingham has an undoubtedly energetic approach to writing. In "Winter in Wensleydale", he even sees his historical roots enacted in the weather:

Winter starts—with viking-skirmishes,
Rapid scoutings of squally north-east rain,

Marauds through Middle Wensleydale. . . .

When he takes off his chain-mail and comes back to the twentieth century, Massingham can write effective documentary set-pieces, as in "In a Restaurant", a poem about down-and-outs.

This is the personnel of poverty,
With lots in common
Like mutterings, anaemic banana-flesh, stained
raincoats—

[7] *Frost-Gods*. By HAROLD MASSINGHAM. Macmillan, £1.50.

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Chatto & Windus

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Sentiment drawn from description is not the only movement of the poem; he enlarges the theme with a direct moral:

Elsewhere also
I've seen such mirror-phobia:
Among the pretences of Fellow-Travelling,

Something between shoulder-rubbing and cold-shouldering
States of mind, where quick,
Suspicious snacks are to be had,

They are such dreary restaurants as this one.

I may be just singularly unsuited for the heroic life, but I prefer this to charging into battle.

VIKING HISTORY and language are also invoked by George Mackay Brown. An Orcadian poet, by reasons of history and geography, is closer to Norse culture than a Yorkshireman to Saxon. Such nostalgia seems more like evidence of sentimentality or disaffection than of a valid cultural antithesis. Brown is more concerned with narrative than re-enacting history in the forms of his language; when he does try, however, he out-Skalds Massingham. "At once the blind tongue blossomed with bodings, biddings." His best idiom is clear and sparse, as, for example, in his poem "Beachcomber":

Monday I found a boot—
Rust and salt leather.
I gave it back to the sea, to dance in.

Tuesday a spar of timber worth thirty bob.
Next winter
It will be a chair, a coffin, a bed.

Wednesday a half can of Swedish spirits.
I tilted my head.
The shore was cold with mermaids and angels. . . .

Sunday, for fear of the elders,
I sit on my bum.
What's heaven? A sea chest with a thousand gold coins.

"Beachcomber" is from Brown's *Fishermen with Ploughs*,[8] a "poem cycle." The book describes the founding of a community by a refugee tribe of Norse fisher people in the 9th century, and the fortunes of their valley of Rackwick on the island of Hoy through time. Moods are progressively heroic, religious, elegiac, apocalyptic and finally optimistic as people return to the valley after the "black pentecostal fire" which has destroyed urban civilisation. As an expressive pattern, this is eloquent, but unsurprising, and also suspect. Brown has surrendered to one of the most futile and sentimental of all modern commonplaces —that rural life is good, pure, suitable, and the ways of urban man bad, prompting "black pentecostal fire", presumably nuclear war, and Satanic evil—"the black circle of Mephistopheles." "Perhaps", the poet argues,

> the quality of life grows poorer as Progress multiplies its gifts on a simple community. The dwellers in islands are drawn to the new altars. The valley is drained of its people. The Rackwick croft ruins are strewn with syrup tins, medicine bottles, bicycle frames, tattered novels, rubber boots, portraits of Queen Victoria.

When Brown says "new altars" he really means it; native Orcadian Christianity is for him unsullied, and his emigrants to the mainland worship the false gods of materialism and a virulent and in the end destructive Evil. There is no arguing with that kind of simplicity: you take it or leave it.

Fortunately, Brown's unacceptable premisses fail to mar the best of his poems, which are now available in *Poems: New and Selected*.[9] "The Funeral of Ally Flett", "Hamnavoe Market", "Old Fisherman With Guitar", "Kirkyard", can be isolated as good examples, in which narrative, subject, description, anecdote, idiom, jell to produce a hard, evocative kind of poem which celebrates Brown's community more authentically than the medievalism of the style in which he writes of the past.

ONE PATTERN of change in recent years which seems to me of great interest is the adoption of "deep image" writing—surreal in tendency, usually loosely narrative in structure—by poets previously associated with traditional rhyming and scanning. Two examples are the American poets James Wright and Louis Simpson. Simpson is especially known in Britain; he has written notable war poetry, a genre the British are obsessed with.

Simpson's rejection of his earlier, more conventional style seems to have been provoked by a necessity to confront larger and peculiarly American themes. He expresses an American Sadness—a lyrical and yet also profoundly critical poetry of the "swept corner of the American consciousness" (as he describes the Sand Creek Massacre).

There is something sad about property
Where it ends, in California.

Or, in the same poem:

It is like night in St Petersburg.
From the Bay a foghorn sounds,

[8] *Fishermen with Ploughs*. By GEORGE MACKAY BROWN. Chatto, £1.25.
[9] *Poems: New and Selected*. By GEORGE MACKAY BROWN. Chatto, £1.25.

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and ships, wrapped in a mist,
creep out with their heavy secrets
to the war "that no one wants."

The St Petersburg simile is significant. *Adventures of the Letter I*[10] begins with a sequence of poems on "Volhynia Province" in the time of the Tsars. Simpson tells us in a note that his mother was born there. He himself was born in Jamaica, and also seems to have Scottish affiliations—he has written a book on James Hogg, and that demands patriotic fervour, or at least a sense of academic duty. His status as an American mind on a tour of re-exile is therefore genuine—Russia, Jamaica, Scotland, the America of the immigrants and Indians. And as the title of the new collection suggests, his dominant theme is identity—personal, spiritual and national. However, these are the "adventures" of a rather careful "I": his idiom is ponderous, everything yields to melancholy, his literal and surrealist narratives carefully measured out like sugar in a time of famine. It has to be admitted, however, that he is a master of that kind of statement, limited as it is.

LIGHT VERSE in the '60s and '70s now takes the form of journalistically aligned surrealism to be chanted in a manner apparently derived from blues singers. Adrian Mitchell thus carries on the light-verse grotesqueries and political satires of Tom Hood. In his book, *Ride the Nightmare*,[11] there are Odes "To Enoch Powell", and "On the Assassination of President Johnson", more or less directly in the Hood tradition. It would be a pleasure to endorse this whole-heartedly; but there is more to poetry than socialism, or being offended by social injustices, sexual repression, etc.

Mr Mitchell operates in an ambience of black and white morality. "Feeling strongly about" (insert cause of choice) is the formula; usually the force of the feeling is such that qualifications or recognitions of complexity are completely missed. Naturally this leads to sentimentality, on such a heroic scale that there is almost no dealing with it. There is so much lack of experience, so much exalted integrity, lying around in Mr Mitchell's work that it is beginning to stink. "Old Age Report" is a case in point:

When a man's too ill or old to work
We punish him.
Half his income is taken away
Or all of it vanishes and he gets pocket money.

[10] *Adventures of the Letter I.* By LOUIS SIMPSON. Oxford, £1.
[11] *Ride the Nightmare.* By ADRIAN MITCHELL. Jonathan Cape, £1.75.

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This characteristic overstatement is so blatant it sounds like right-wing irony, while the inaccuracy of Mr Mitchell's complaint is added to by the sentimental stupidity of his solutions:

So Mrs Wells has always longed to travel?
Print her a season ticket to the universe. . . .

Finally, he thinks there is a global aspirin which actually makes the world better:

We could wipe away some of their worry,
Some of their pain—what I mean
Is so bloody simple:
The old people are being robbed
And punished and we ought
To be letting them out of their cages
Into green spaces of enchanting light.

"Green spaces of enchanting light"? Mr Mitchell seems not to know how people live. He thinks they can be treated like pit ponies. That's not socialism, or idealism; it's disrespect.

AN ALTOGETHER more serious proposition is Tom Pickard,[12] surely one of the most remarkable reputations in poetry today. Consider, for example, the pristine excellence, the uninterrupted clarity of,

so sad
to be
so sad

or the larger significance, the sheer intellectual reach of such lines as these:

my fingers
become butterflies

strange words
travel to my balls

Or the terminal profundity of

and use my arse only
for shitting and farting.

One might suggest that this is too much loading every rift with ordure, were it not for the suspicion that Mr Pickard speaks through the same vent:

gliding through space
breath my only propulsion

Or, as Robert Creeley said, "Sometimes men make sounds as birds do—just to sing. That need is so clear a fact of Tom Pickard's poetry men would do well to listen. They will not soon again have so lovely a man to inform them."

[12] *The Order of Chance.* By TOM PICKARD. Fulcrum Press, £1.40.

Amis, McCarthy, Naipaul

New Novels—By DERWENT MAY

IN HIS NOVELS, Kingsley Amis goes on worrying about the right way to behave much more open-mindedly than one might suppose from his public pronouncements. *Girl, 20*[1]—his best book for some years—is about a composer and conductor in his fifties, Sir Roy Vandervane, who decides to leave his second wife for a hard-boiled girl of seventeen. And part of its strength is that even its most repellent characters—*i.e.*, most of its characters—have some good lines, have something of a case to make for themselves.

The story is told by Sir Roy's friend, Douglas Yandell, a free-lance music critic aged 33. Yandell is another in that unbroken line of narrators, or leading consciousnesses, who have been essential to the structure of all Amis' novels, and have marred them at the same time. They have all had a roughly similar double function in the books. They have provided a stream of sharp observations, moral apophthegms, irascible jokes, insulting exaggerations and disgusted noises; meanwhile they have pursued gluttonous and messy sex-lives of their own, leading to a chastening end. In Amis's last two novels, *I Want It Now* and *The Green Man,* they haven't held their two aspects together at all well. Ronnie, the TV pundit in *I Want It Now,* was positively implausible on account of the speed with which grossness and decency alternated not only in his words but in his acts. With Allingham, the pub landlord in *The Green Man,* the difficulty lay more in the alternations in the author's tone: the reader got too bumpy a ride, as the invitation to chuckle sympathetically with Allingham gave way to the need to be outraged by him, and back again. Yandell is a better job than either of these, though not so good as Roger, the overweight publisher in *One Fat Englishman,* Amis' best specimen of the type yet.

[1] *Girl, 20.* By KINGSLEY AMIS. Cape, £1.50.

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Yandell is fond of Roy, though he deplores and even despises many of his ways. The conductor is brimful of vitality. He has his own style of dealing with fads and fashions he dislikes: for instance, he deplores the fashionable wearing of dark glasses, and on one occasion grabs an offender by the arm, and steers him across the road commiserating on his blindness, before the beshaded chap knows what has hit him. He has his own vocabulary of swear-words, or "fuckettes", consisting of phrases that have annoyed him at different times, like "School of thought!", "Christian gentleman!" and "Spiro Agnew!" Less to Yandell's liking, he preaches left-wing ideas over the champagne in his St. James's club, and is prone to original means of propagating the faith, like putting aggressively pro-*Apartheid* stickers on his car windows in order to provoke healthy disturbances. (It results in the healthy slashing of his tyres.)

But it is especially Roy's attachment to his new girl-friend, Sylvia, that causes Yandell concern. This attachment blossoms forth into a general desire to make a hit with youth, and Roy writes a rubbishy piece of music with a vaguely pornographic title to perform at a pop concert—to which most of the young audience respond by drifting out. Above all, though, he intends to leave his wife and children for Sylvia. The family is already in a bad way, with Penny, the daughter in her twenties, heading for anomie, the student son hating his father so much that he sells a scurrilous story about him to the press, and the younger son growing uncontrollable through his father's bored indulgence. But Yandell is forced to recognise that nothing will stop Roy—and that Roy's earnest consultations with him take place merely to assuage Roy's conscience with the thought that he didn't take the step of marrying Sylvia lightly.

Sylvia herself is quite ruthless. When Roy's wife comes to see her and makes a histrionic scene, Sylvia's answer to the cry "What could any man of the remotest intelligence or taste or discrimination see in you?" is instantly to strip naked. It makes its point about truth, however cruelly. And when Yandell keeps wondering where they are going on a mystery evening out that Roy has planned, her jibe at him strikes home: "You're half out of your mind worrying that you won't be able to fit everything in together. You call that living? Just making sure today's like yesterday and last week and last year. You're all frozen up."

The conclusion is sombre, with Roy and Sylvia unrelenting, and Penny—the toughest-seeming of the family, but the worst afflicted—taking to heroin. In the end the interest circles back on to Yandell, who is left reflecting that for all his meddling and listening, the amount of help he has given to his friends is nil: while the thought that he has adhered to his rule "about not stopping blokes doing what they wanted to" is proving a good deal less satisfying than it should. These facts seem related, as outcrops of his personality, to his attitude to his ill-dressed surburban girl-friend, Valerie. He has always acknowledged that sexual pleasure is his sole purpose in seeing her—and she would confess to much the same about him. But at this point she has just met a West Indian whose interest in her goes further, and she has given up Yandell to marry him. Surveying all these developments, Yandell has a dismal feeling "as if I had taken a fatally wrong decision years before and only now seen how much I had lost by it."

The mood of these last pages is what most helps to hold Yandell together as a whole and convincing personality. Yet there remains a certain discordant note. Yandell's dogged insistence throughout on the importance of sheer sexual satisfaction has something in common with Roy's and Sylvia's, and though in all three cases—as in those described in Amis's other books—crudeness and irresponsibility are associated with such a state of mind, nevertheless Amis also seems to be making, in all his books, a kind of forlorn, almost missionary appeal about the need for sexual realism. How to relate the moral and the sexual drives, if this is what they are like? Such awkwardness as we find in his character-drawing of such people as Ronnie, Allingham and Yandell seems to stem from a continuing irresolution on Amis' own part about this matter of universal interest.

MARY MCCARTHY'S NEW BOOK[2] is also concerned, on the face of it, with modern youth. But she has managed to compose a portrait of an extraordinarily likeable young man. Peter Levi, 19, his mother of old New England stock, his father Italian-Jewish, is very much his mother's son. She's an ardent and slightly absurd keeper-up of standards—in forthright speaking, in acknowledging the claims of justice and logic, in preserving the best in American culture, in home-cooking. Peter already has her qualities—Solon the law-giver,

[2] *Birds of America.* By MARY MCCARTHY. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £1.75.

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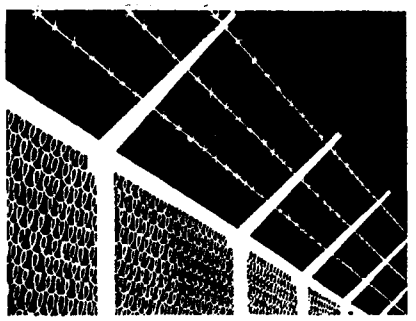
he's called at home—but he is more open to new ideas and at the same time more stringent at following a thought through; he is also more soft-mannered and relaxed than her. Most of the episodes—they are like short stories rather than chapters—take place in France and Italy, where Peter is spending the year 1964. He has rather humble adventures: bird-watching in the Buttes-Chaumont park with *Les jeunes ornithologistes de France*; taking his potted plant out for a walk, and getting it smashed when he tries to rescue an innocent bystander from the attentions of the Paris police during a demonstration; discovering, in Rome, his love of Borromini and his dislike of the overweening Bellini. The drama in all this is light but real; the drama of watching a sensitive conscience at work in a boy who is nevertheless perfectly sturdy and full of pleasure in life. When one of the teachers on the train brings out her hideous broken denture, yellowish and pink and wrapped in Kleenex, and says, indirectly addressing Peter, "It isn't the first time he's seen a lady's denture, I bet," whatever should Peter say?

"As a matter of fact, it is," Peter said hoarsely. Then he feared he had given offence.



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When Peter's neighbour on the pavement is arrested by the police, Peter knocks on the door of the Black Maria, wanting to go along and give evidence in his defence. A policeman sticks his head out: "*C'est pas un taxi, monsieur.*" Such incidents are characteristic of the charm and delicate humour of the book; but as Peter's dilemmas and decisions rarely involve any dramatic consequences, it's clever of Miss McCarthy to have sustained the pleasure through 300 pages. Part of her success in doing that comes from another source, her passion for detail. The Parisian scene, especially, is richly pictured here.

However, there's more to the book than meets the eye. I think Miss McCarthy hoped to create a frame here for displaying and analysing some of the questioning of a liberal conscience in circumstances not too loaded with current political passions. And, of course, many young people are in a position where they can easily try to exercise their scruples to the full, because neither their own interests nor anyone else's are seriously at stake, and they have all the time in the world. However, this means that their moral situation isn't really comparable to that of many of their elders; and, from that point of view, Peter's "law-giving" is less interesting than Miss McCarthy is perhaps tempted to think.

There's also another, somewhat loosely related yet important theme in the book. The first two episodes are about two long visits made by mother and son to Rocky Port, a village on the New England coast. The first visit is in 1960, the second four years later. Between whiles, the village has changed dramatically. No one starts dinner with soup, or oysters, or avocado with Roquefort dressing any more: they just have a Martini-on-the-rocks, then main course. No one owns muffin tins or cake racks or a flour sifter any more—they have practically nothing in their cupboards but drinking equipment. There are no fowls from the butcher—only roasters and fryers and chicken-in-parts. Peter's mother more or less declares war on the village after concluding that nature and civilisation are disappearing hand-in-hand; and residents and shopkeepers alike start being nasty to her. It ends with her and Peter assaulting a policeman and being carried off to jail when the policeman tries to force them to put a hideous plaque about the history of their house back on the wall. The whole set of incidents provides excellent comedy, and later, writing from Paris, Peter gently remonstrates with his mother:

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> Your ethics is based on style, which never has to give a consistent reason why it is the way it is. . . . You shudder at the thought of a double breasted turkey because a single breasted turkey is classical. But you can't persuade anyone else unless they love you and want to be like you. You saw that in Rocky Port.

Peter himself is tempted by a more intellectual counterpart of his mother's way of looking, expressed in Kant's thought that "the beautiful things in the world prove that man is made for and fits into the world." It is a view he is not allowed to keep. At the end of the book Kant himself comes and sits at the foot of Peter's bed, and murmurs "Nature is dead, *mein Kind*." But the remark seems more appropriately addressed to Peter's mother than to him: through most of the book, he is not in practice so dependent on the side of Kant's thought that connects ethics with "nature", and his main principles and promptings can survive the bedside revelation.

WITH V. S. NAIPAUL we come to a purer art. *In A Free State*[3] (the winner of the 1971 Booker Prize) consists of five distinct but related pieces—a long story, two short stories, and a sketch at either end of the book. All are about people far from their home country. The two sketches deftly and dryly suggest a certain novelty in the post-war international scene. In the first of them, set on a Greek steamer crossing from Piraeus to Alexandria, it is an Englishman who is really the outcast: a tramp with "quivering wet eyes" who irritates a Lebanese furniture-maker, and is humiliated and assaulted by him and an Austrian boy. In the sketch at the end of the book, set in Luxor, some poor Egyptian children are whipped while Italian tourists gaze calmly at the spectacle and the narrator—who we take to be Naipaul himself, a West Indian—intervenes. However, it is the Chinese Communist visitors—members of a circus team—who leave the deepest impression on the Egyptians in Luxor that season, with the cheap medals and postcards of Chinese peonies that they distribute to all the waiters in the hotel before leaving.

The two short stories I didn't think quite so successful. One is about a poor Indian, Santosh, who goes from Bombay to Washington in the service of the man he has always worked for. He is quite disorientated, and hardly ever leaves his employers apartment: but one day he meets an Indian who owns a restaurant, and he is tempted to go and work for him. Now he is free, the restaurant owner tells him; and though by changing his job he has become an illegal immigrant, he can regularise his position by finding an American negress to marry. He does so. But at the end of the story he reflects that, though he is free, he now feels brother to nobody—all his freedom has brought him is the knowledge that he is a distinct person, and that that person must die. The trouble with the story is that Santosh's progress to disillusionment is too patly formulated. The story's too detailed to pass off as a fable, but too tidy for realism.

The really remarkable piece of work is the long story, set in an African state after independence, from which the book takes its title. It's beautifully written, and creates the scene that it describes absolutely convincingly. Bobby, an English homosexual who works for the new government as an administrative officer, is spending his last night in the capital on a visit there. He tries to pick up a young Zulu in the bar of the New Shropshire, but after appearing to lure him on, the Zulu spits in his face. Africa has entranced Bobby, with its space and wonderful human variety and apparent promise of "safe adventure"; but

[3] *In A Free State*. By V. S. NAIPAUL. Deutsch. £1.75.

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Africa is going to leave him more lost and alone than ever.

We see the process go a step further the next day. Bobby's capacity for euphoria returns quickly enough—he is driving back across the country to the Southern Collectorate, something he loves doing—and it is threatened this morning only by the fact that he's obliged to give a lift to an Englishwoman. This is Linda, the wife of a BBC man who's come to work for the African radio. She's already been more coarsened than Bobby by the opportunities in her new life, and more embittered by its limitations. As the two drive on and on across the changing landscape, the tensions and moments of unexpected understanding between them, and their strong, fluctuating responses to all they encounter on the road, fill out superbly a picture of the forces and the emotions that dominate this bizarre post-colonial time. At any rate Black Africa shows it is not for Bobby and Linda. And in Naipaul's hands the demonstration is exquisitely made.

If I have one reservation about the story it is that it is so concentrated and allusive that its effect evaporates, after reading it, more quickly than one might expect. It's as though the story is trying to squeeze out a perfume called Essence of Alienation, subtle and bitter but unstable. Fine though it is, "In a Free State" doesn't to my mind supersede Naipaul's admirable non-fiction study of the joys and moral depredations of colonialism, *The Loss of El Dorado*.

Free Thinker

DAVID TRIBE, the President of the National Secular Society, is well-placed to tell the story of Charles Bradlaugh,[1] who founded the Society in 1866, ousting George Jacob Holyoake as the leader of secularism. He has ready access to the files of *The Freethinker*, the only free-thought periodical to survive until to-day and has consulted many unpublished Bradlaugh family papers.

Charles Bradlaugh (1833-1891) is the only one of the many remarkable men and women associated with the N.S.S. who can be said to have become a national figure associated with free-thought. Mrs Annie Besant, for fourteen years (1875-89) his close collaborator and rival for fame, went on to achieve an international reputation as a theosophist far greater than either of theirs for atheism. G. W. Foote, who devoted his whole attention to the N.S.S., was little known outside secularist circles. But Bradlaugh was able to dramatise as living issues matters of free-thought which had in the gentle hands of Holyoake become regarded with a tolerance bordering on indifference.

The history of the Free-thought movement in the 19th century is very complicated. There was continual dissension among the would-be leaders, partly due to personal ambitions, partly to disagreement on tactics. But Bradlaugh succeeded, not in reconciling their differences, but in overshadowing them. He was physically a powerful man, good in a brawl, while his army service taught him to avoid brawls by planning demonstrations with the discipline of a military parade. His training in the law made him an advocate, the match of any professional in winning a case on technical, if no other, grounds. Unlike Holyoake and Foote, he had no yearning for secular martyrdom. He was an able and pompous speaker, clothing his naked atheism in almost Biblical language. He made the headlines, without courting publicity. The republication of Knowlton's *Fruits of Philosophy* by himself and Besant threatened to destroy the unity of the N.S.S. But their acquittal followed by his years of dramatic struggle to be seated as junior member for Nottingham, rallied the rank and file. After a sulky revolt the ambitious Foote decided he stood a better chance of succeeding Bradlaugh as President if he returned to the fold.

What is remarkable is not the disagreements among these highly individualistic dissidents, but the degree of unity which Bradlaugh succeeded in imposing. From Mr Tribe's compendious biography, the secret seems to lie in the fact that Bradlaugh, even when President of the N.S.S. and editor of the *National Reformer*, saw these merely as activities subordinate to the achievement of a rational Republic, of which (somewhat to our surprise) some of his contemporaries expected him to be the first President. In his day he was anathematised and adored. But after his death he sank into an obscurity which was undeserved. Though he did more for the cause of free-thought than any single person in the 19th century, this most ordinary of odd-balls never wasted time in being imprisoned, and so he lacks the glamour of the secular martyrs who achieved less but suffered more.

Arthur Calder-Marshall

[1] *President Charles Bradlaugh, M.P.* By DAVID TRIBE. Elek Books, £4.

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AUTHORS & CRITICS

The English Sickness

Reconsidering Our "Stagnant Society"

MY THEME IS the sins of the 'Sixties. It was a decade in which many brave and honest men laboured to resolve the problems of our society. So far they have not succeeded.

Britain in 1971 is in many ways an exciting, challenging place—a place where dreams and ideals can still be followed. But the "English sickness" has not been cured, or even alleviated. The geese on the Capitol have clucked remorselessly and repeatedly through the 1960s, but in vain. Our diagnoses of a decade ago have passed into the conventional wisdom, but the disease has got worse.

Re-reading the book I wrote on *The Stagnant Society* some ten years ago, I am struck by three things. First, those areas where I have been disproved by events. In 1960, like many others, I was disposed to take very seriously the threat to the West posed by the growing economic challenge of the Soviet bloc, and to assume that part of this challenge reflected a greater sense of social purpose within the (in many other ways highly unattractive) planned societies of the Communist world. Today that challenge no longer looks so impressive. Real growth rates in Eastern Europe are today almost certainly no faster than in the West, and in technological advance the gap between the two systems is widening rather than narrowing. And few people today would credit Mr Brezhnev's Russia or its *cordon sanitaire* of unwilling satellites with a glowing sense of social purpose (excluding perhaps those countries like Rumania which have achieved a qualified independence). The 1960s in the Soviet bloc have been on the whole an era of conservatism and increasing introversion. This poses its own problems for the world of the '70s, to which I refer below.

I was also wrong in predicting a problem of surplus capacity and resultant slowing down of growth in the advanced industrial countries of the West in the '60s, and a consequent need for intensified investment in the Third World. Certainly there have been periods and sectors of excess capacity, but on the whole demand in the advanced industrial countries has remained extremely buoyant and the volume of intra-trade has continued to grow at a fantastic rate.

Finally, to complete the *mea culpa*, the political scene in the United Kingdom has changed fundamentally since I wrote. The Labour Party succeeded in the early '60s in liberating itself from the grasp of socialist fundamentalism which at the start of the decade threatened to suck it into the limbo of history—and it achieved this without needing to ally itself formally with the Liberals, as I advocated. The Liberal Party has indeed largely faded from the scene, to an extent which makes the importance accorded to Mr Jo Grimond in my book read rather oddly today.

SO MUCH FOR my falsified predictions. The second point that strikes me on re-reading is how many specific proposals have in fact been implemented during the 1960s. Prices and incomes policy; Neddy-type indicative national economic planning; more active regional policies; export incentives; redundancy pay, contracts of service, earnings-related unemployment benefit; industrial training boards; expanded higher education and specifically business education; a National Research and Development Council; a selective payroll tax; greater emphasis on professional management and on staff conditions for shop-floor workers. All of these are advocated in the book, and all have happened—though not always in the form proposed. Two other proposals—British membership of the European Economic Community, and a reform of collective bargaining to give collective agreements contractual status and the Registrar the power to ensure that unions abide by their own constitutions—are key objectives of the British Government at the time of writing. A value added turnover tax is a strong probability within the next few years.

Indeed, the throughgoing programme of institutional questioning and reform for which I called ten years ago has been very much a feature of the decade. It has not, however,

THIS ARTICLE *by Michael Shanks, author of "The Stagnant Society" (1961), continues our series of self-critical revaluations. Among previous contributions were David Riesman's on "The Lonely Crowd"* (ENCOUNTER, *October 1969) and Arthur Schlesinger on "The Vital Centre" (September 1970).*

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produced the results that I for one hoped for and expected. Why not?

There are, I believe, four reasons. The first is that such reforms take time to produce results. This applies particularly to reforms in the area of training and education and of industrial structure. I believe that much of our disappointment and disenchantment with the results of reform in the '60s has come from our inability to appreciate the kind of time-scale against which we are operating. We expected long-term changes to yield short-term results. I believe that we will in fact increasingly feel the benefit of the reforms of the last decade during the '70s.

One reason why we expected long-term reforms to produce short-term benefits is because, throughout most of the '60s we lacked coherent short-term economic policies. This is the second reason why our structural policies apparently produced such disappointing results. They were expected to produce quick results against a background of an over-valued currency and a situation in which demand and supply were seldom effectively brought into balance. The record of the Treasury in demand management has been abysmal throughout most of the 1960s, and no policy for long-term structural change can be expected to compensate for this failure.

The third reason for the disappointing return on policies for structural change has been that, despite all the talk about planning and strategy in Whitehall, these are precisely what have been lacking. Changes have been produced in an *ad hoc*, uncoordinated manner, not as successive steps in a coherent long-term strategy to achieve clearly-defined objectives. This can be most clearly seen in the sorry sequence of expedients, developed without reference to the other aspects of economic strategy, which has passed for a Prices and Incomes policy: a policy which was expected, in different degrees at different times, to promote social justice, to educate trade unions and company directors on the need for greater centralisation of decision-making, to divert resources from consumption to capital investment, to impress central bankers, to prop up an over-valued pound, to achieve a faster rate of growth, to deflate demand, and so on. This is not to say that an Incomes policy is unnecessary or undesirable. I believe it is fundamental to economic success—as will be made apparent below. But it is no good developing policies, particularly policies as complex and controversial as these, without defining clearly what one is trying to do and why.

The fourth reason for disappointment with the results of the reforms of the 1960s is, perhaps, more fundamental and brings me to the third basic fact which has impressed me on re-reading this book I wrote ten years ago. This third impression is, paradoxically, how little, fundamentally, has changed. How do I square this with the implementation of so many of the reforms I proposed? The reconciliation is simple, fundamental and, I think, deeply depressing. The reforms which have been carried out have been in almost every case initiated by government. Yet what I called for was, essentially, a programme of self-reform to be initiated by industry and the trade unions. Of course in certain cases the initial agent of reform had to be government. But by no means in all, and certainly not in the field of collective bargaining and trade union matters.

IF THERE IS A CENTRAL THEME in *The Stagnant Society* it is the need to modernise our system of industrial relations, for it is here that social factors impact on economic performance; where the inequalities of our society, and the sense of insecurity to which they give rise, inhibit by their influence on institutions and attitudes the effective use of our national resources. The best agents for reform in this field are the practitioners on both sides of industry. But the reforms generated from within industry in the 1960s in this field have been minimal. The extension of fringe benefits in terms of contract of service, severance pay and earnings-related unemployment benefit have come from legislation, not collective bargaining. More fundamentally, the trade unions have lamentably failed to carry out the internal reforms needed to remedy the defects described in *The Stagnant Society*—defects generally admitted, inside as well as outside the trade union movement, to be serious and potentially lethal. A brave but abortive attempt at self-questioning and internal reform was launched in the early 1960s by George Woodcock, then the T.U.C.'s general secretary, but the movement petered out with little accomplished. As the state of labour relations deteriorated during the second half of the decade, first the Labour Government and then Mr Heath's Tories decided that the reform of collective bargaining would have to be carried out by legislation. Mr Heath's Bill is a comprehensive and intelligent document which is dealt with more fully below. But reform of industrial relations by Whitehall is very much a *pis aller*, or a second-best solution.

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Can Governments Innovate?

INDEED perhaps one of the most fundamental lessons of the 1960s has been the limitations of government—any government—as an agent of change. This is partly, but only partly, a matter of organisation. Government traditionally has tended to function as a shock absorber, as a reactor to pressures and stimuli from elsewhere. In the '60s for the first time a serious attempt has been made to use it as a dynamo, as a stimulator and initiator of change in society, as a partner of industry and the other "great estates" of the realm—the trade unions, the educational and research establishments, local authorities, and so on—in the management of change. The instinct was right, if at times spoiled by over-enthusiasm. But the means, the structure of government, were inadequate to the task. Only now is central government itself (following the Fulton Report and the setting up of the Civil Service Department) starting to adapt its structure to its new managerial role.

The problem, essentially, is the method of decision-making in government. Lacking the disciplines of the balance sheet, and forced in every situation to balance a wide range of often conflicting considerations, the process of decision-making is in any case bound to be slower and more tentative in government than in business. But the problem is compounded by the complexity of ministerial structure and the comparative absence of personal accountability in Whitehall, which has meant that decision-making has tended to be done by committees rather than individuals—and committees, moreover, representing a variety of different ministers and interests; with the result that decisions have tended to be delayed, and when they have emerged to be based on compromise and a "you scratch my back I'll scratch yours" approach. The necessity of relying on inter-departmental committees to formulate policies has been intensified by the excessive size and unwieldy nature of the top executive body, the Cabinet, and by the fact that the allocation of responsibilities between departments has not always been logical or clear-cut.

A SECOND PROBLEM has been the fact that civil servants have been, and are, strongly discouraged from taking or recommending the kind of commercial risks which are essential in industry. The Public Accounts Committee is a formidable deterrent. If a minister takes a controversial decision in the allocation of public funds he can expect to be assailed in the House of Commons, and the ultimate sin for a civil servant is to put his minister in the position of not having a convincing answer at question-time in the House. It is not surprising in these circumstances that civil servants tend to proceed cautiously, to follow precedent wherever possible—and while these are admirable traits, they are not always consistent with the kind of dynamic, entrepreneurial role which politicians have tried to inject into government in the past decade.

The instinct of the politicians has been right, and it is therefore necessary to adopt the methods and structure of government to its new role—as is indeed now starting to be done. The greater involvement of government with industry is a product, not of ideology, but of the changing marketing and technological environment. First, there is the commitment of government to economic growth—a commitment which dates in most countries to the 1950s, and in the U.K. to 1960. A faster rate of economic growth can only come, in a country like Britain which has no substantial margin of unused capital and idle labour (and no immediate source of extra labour from immigrants or a declining peasantry), from more effective use of existing resources by business; government's commitment to growth can only be redeemed by business which produces the growth. Consequently government has an inescapable interest in the performance of business.

Equally, however, business has a definite interest in the performance of government. In every advanced country today government is the biggest investor, the biggest single purchaser of industry's goods and services, the biggest financier of research and development, and a major provider of goods and services in its own right—quite apart from its importance as an employer of labour, and its role in influencing, by legislation, and by fiscal, monetary and trade policy, the climate within which business operates. Business has a vested interest, for example, in seeing that the public sector is not pre-empting too large a segment of national resources, but at the same time is capable of providing an adequate infrastructure; it also has an interest in seeing that the economic policies of government are conducive to growth and efficiency, and that they have enough continuity to enable industry to plan ahead with confidence. These conditions have not always been met in Britain over the past decade.

Business and government, therefore, are condemned to partnership, no matter how irksome both sides may find the relationship

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from time to time. But there is also a more fundamental factor. If one examines those companies which have been successful innovators in the modern world, one finds that they are distinguished by three characteristics. One is luck; the second is the presence at the head of the business at a crucial stage in its career of somebody with the characteristics of the *entrepreneur*—the willingness to take risks and experiment; the third and most important characteristic is coordination. By this I mean that in each successful innovating company the different facets of management—research and development, finance, production, marketing, personnel—are working together to a coherent plan or strategy articulated by a chief executive.

It is a commonplace that we are living in a world of unprecedented, and accelerating, change. In the first place the marketing environment for every business is changing with bewildering rapidity. As consumers become more affluent, as techniques of persuasion become more refined and seductive, tastes are more ephemeral and harder to foresee. Moreover, the vast improvement in communications, the increased opportunities created by new technology, and the steady reduction in barriers to international trade, are increasingly turning the world into a single market and thus strengthening the pressures of competition. All this adds to the uncertainties of business, at a time when the increasing degree of capital intensity makes it more and more expensive to misjudge the market. Hence, as accurate sales forecasting becomes at once more difficult and more vital, companies are forced to develop their marketing techniques —including market research and sales analysis —to a degree undreamed of in even the recent past. In the 1970s the impact of social environmental pressures on marketing and corporate strategy will add a new vein of complexity to the problems facing business.

In parallel with the problems just outlined on the demand side are the growing problems of adaptation to the advances of technology on the supply side. There is a widening technological gap between those firms, societies, and countries which have been more adept at exploiting the opportunities of modern scientific application in new products, processes, and methods, and the less adept. In all known cases there seems to be a gap between what is already known to be theoretically possible and what is actually profitably applied. But the variations in the degree of achievement are very remarkable, even within different parts of the same company or factory. And if we are not proving very successful in applying modern technology effectively, we are proving even less so in coping with the consequences of past technology. Indeed, as I shall argue below, this is perhaps our most serious problem in the world today.

IN ORDER TO COPE with these problems companies have come to realise increasingly that they must work within the framework of a corporate plan. The generation of an exciting range of new products is not enough. They must be produced at the right time, at the right price, in the right quantities. This requires a coordinated strategy covering product planning, cash flow generation, investment and production planning, pricing strategy and personnel policy; personnel policy designed to see both that the company has enough people of the necessary skills and ability, and that change will not be frustrated through worker (or indeed management) resistance. It is probable that more companies have failed in recent years through trying to innovate without the proper framework of planning than through innovating too slowly. Planning is required to identify the opportunities open to the corporation and ensure their exploitation; and also to identify in advance the problems, to try to ensure their avoidance.

If this is true of the micro-world of the business enterprise—and all the experience of the last decade and more suggests it is—it is at least equally true of the macro-world of the nation state. Nations like individual businesses have to identify their areas of commercial strength and weakness, to decide where and how to concentrate their resources. And the more rapidly the international environment changes the more necessary the articulation of a national strategy becomes. Moreover, the key problems of business efficiency and adaptation to change tend to lie on the interface between two or more of the aspects of what might be called "national management"—the great estates of the realm. The importance of close relations between governments and business if each is to perform effectively has already been demonstrated. Equally, national efficiency demands that wherever possible collective bargaining should be related to productivity and efficiency; that there should be the greatest possible interchange of ideas between business and the research establishments in the public sector; that there should be close contact between the providers of education and its main users in industry and government; and so on.

Thus, just as a business has to coordinate

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the efforts of the different functions of management if it is to survive in a rapidly changing world, so if it is to master the winds of change must the national community seek to coordinate the activities of the different functions of national management—in business, national and local government, the trade unions, the educational and research establishments, and so on. And this will not happen of its own accord. It will only happen as a result of a sustained effort at national planning, however it be described; and as the pace of change around us quickens, the more urgent it becomes.

WE HAVE TO THINK of management, I believe, in a context broader than the traditional one. A manager is anybody who uses his command of human resources to achieve certain dynamic objectives (as opposed to an administrator, whose objectives may be purely static). This definition embraces politicians and civil servants, union officials and shop stewards, educators, hospital administrators, and many other occupations in addition to managers in business enterprises. All are in the trade of "managing change"—the most pressing preoccupation of modern civilisation, and one which on the evidence to date is not being very well handled in any major country or community.

It follows, I believe, that the scope for "disengagement" as currently projected in Whitehall is strictly limited. Certainly any major retreat of government from the kind of relationship with other sectors of the community indicated above would be disastrous, and in fact unworkable. However, there is a more limited sense—which one hopes is what the current rhetoric from Whitehall conceals—in which some degree of disengagement makes sense. There is, first, the technical question of the size and scope of the public sector, which has been steadily growing in recent years. There is everything to be said for reviewing the activities of the public sector, and deciding which if any could be more effectively handled in other ways than at present, including the possible hiving-off of some to the private sector. Before the 1970 election this examination had already started in central government, with a view to seeing whether any of Whitehall's multifarious activities should be hived off to public agencies or other bodies; and there is no reason why the same process should not be extended to the nationalised industries and local authorities—provided it does not arbitrarily restrict organic growth in public enterprises. This is a large, complex and fascinating subject, but one somewhat removed from our main theme.

Second, "disengagement" makes sense if it implies a more rigorous definition, within the concept of partnership in planning, of the roles and responsibilities of each partner. There is little doubt that under the Labour government detailed intervention in the affairs of individual enterprises—particularly ailing ones—tended at times to go further than was prudent. Government, as I indicated above, is not well designed as a substitute for business management. In general government can be most effective if it confines itself to establishing the climate and ground rules within which business enterprise seeks to maximise long-term profitability—though more detailed intervention cannot of course be eschewed altogether in critical cases. A clearer definition of the roles and functions of each partner should make for a better and more effective working relationship. This is wholly to be desired. What is not desirable is an attempt to wind up the partnership. It remains to be seen which is the objective of the present government.

The third argument in favour of a limited degree of "disengagement" is the tendency under an overtly interventionist regime for other sectors of the community to "leave it to Whitehall", to believe that an omnipotent government will solve all their problems for them. Alas, governments are not omnipotent, or even particularly efficient. Certainly as agents of change they are, as mentioned above, rather ineffective. It may well be that the pace of reform would have been quicker within industry in the last decade had not government been so eager—from the best of motives—to dominate the action, and had it not—again from the best of motives—contrived to give the impression that its powers were less limited than they proved in fact to be.

Reform in Whitehall

THESE ARE MATTERS of nice judgment, and we shall see what we shall see. None of this, however, in any way diminishes the necessity for a more effective system of national planning, still less for the government itself to clarify its objectives and priorities in the economic/industrial field. Without the framework for strategy which an effective national plan provides, government clearly finds extreme difficulty in resolving internal conflicts over policy objectives and in establishing priorities in the allocation of resources.

Typically there is not one single government policy, but a series of different policies as

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each department fights for its own pet priorities in inter-departmental committee and ultimately in Cabinet—the eventual outcome having much more to do with the standing, guile, and persuasiveness of individual ministers than with a rational and objective evaluation of alternative strategies within the framework of an agreed plan. This dilemma is rendered the more acute by the pressure of day-to-day problems in Whitehall, and by the inevitable preoccupation of ministers with short-term tactics—for a minister must make his departmental reputation quickly, since he cannot normally expect to remain in any one department for more than a few years; the result being that energies tend to be dominated by the short-term, with inadequate attention to the longer term issues where in fact government can make the biggest impact for good or ill.

It is as a potential solvent to these defects in the government machine that Mr Heath's establishment of a central capability unit in the Cabinet Office is important. The unit could provide the nucleus of a government central staff for national planning. If such planning is to be successful, it must bear much more resemblance to the more advanced corporate plans in industry than to the earlier Neddy and National Plans of 1962 and 1965. It is also essential that work be more rationally and economically allocated between government departments, that the committee structure in Whitehall be rationalised and streamlined, and that so far as possible individual accountability should be established within the civil service as in industry. With these changes government should be in a position to start to realise the aspirations of 1964—though how far these aspirations will remain valid under Mr Heath is, as I have said, problematical.

However, important though all this is, salvation for the sickness of our society will not come from government. In fact the grip of government on our affairs seems to be diminishing all the time, as society becomes more complex and at the same time more international. The tremendously powerful, dangerous and apparently irrational undercurrents which have characterised world society in the '60s have received very little check or impetus from the activities of governments. And at the same time the rapid growth of international business enterprises has presented national governments with a challenge to which up to now they have found no answer. Whole areas of life in our "global electronic village" appear to be passing out of the control of national governments.

Although in many respects they appear more out of touch with the facts of modern life than the Labour Party, the Conservatives seem to be more clearly aware of the essential limitations of the power of government in present circumstances, and of the danger of appearing to have a greater power and competence than actually exists. It is a curious paradox, therefore, that in the crucial area of industrial relations—an area where the limitations of legislation and State interference are peculiarly evident and acute—Mr Heath's government should have sought to extend the area of control and legislation to a degree unprecedented in our national history.

The T.U.C.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS have moved steadily nearer the centre of the political arena since *The Stagnant Society* was written. The reasons are not far to seek. In an era of institutional reform, the trade unions have remained an increasing anachronism. George Woodcock's attempt at internal reform and re-structuring failed. There have been some union amalgamations, but they have had little effect on overall union structure and policy. The Communists have been driven from power in the Electrical Trades Union by the public revelation of their fraudulent activities. The man who ousted them, Mr Leslie Cannon, the best and bravest union leader of the decade, died prematurely at the end of 1970. During the decade the two biggest and most powerful unions, the Transport and General Workers and the Amalgamated Engineering and Foundry Workers, moved sharply to the Left under new leaderships. Business unionism made its belated appearance on the British scene in the form of Mr Clive Jenkins, who began the big push of trade unionism into the white collar and professional workers area. Mr Jenkins, however, has been too much of a maverick and a "loner" to have much influence with other unions.

However, union reform would probably not have become a burning political issue had it not been for the growing seriousness of cost inflation fed by low productivity in Britain. During the 1960s Britain's growth rate remained appallingly low, and our living standards began to slip alarmingly below our competitors'. A vicious circle began to operate more and more ominously. Governments periodically restricted industrial growth to contain demand inflation, only to find that wages continued to rise; with expansion res-

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tricted, rising costs had to be met by rising prices, thus intensifying the inflationary process, while the long-term competitiveness of industry was hit by the restrictions on investment which accompanied government "squeezes" on credit and demand. Low investment resulting from governments' "stop-go" policies, and from the slow and chequered growth rate of the economy, meant that industry lacked the capacity to take advantage of favourable movements in world trade, or to satisfy demand when the economy was allowed, as in 1964, to run at full blast. It also meant that the ratio of labour to capital remained excessively high by European standards, so that labour productivity was low and industry's vulnerability to rising labour costs remained high. At the same time attempts to improve labour productivity by the introduction of modern management techniques were too often frustrated by shop-floor resistance.

If Britain was to break out of this vicious circle, two things were needed:

> *1.* some kind of central agreement to limit wage increases to what the country could afford; *2.* some means of breaking the resistance to change on the shop-floor, so that industry could improve the effectiveness of labour and thus speed up the growth rate which would be needed eventually to meet the demands for higher real wages among other things.

The problems of incomes policy and trade union reform have therefore been closely interconnected. Throughout most of the '60s, the preferred policy of successive governments has been to try to introduce what might be called the "Swedish solution."

The essence of this approach was to seek to build up the authority of the central institutions on both sides of industry, to treat them as partners of government in policy-making in return for their exercise of discipline over their members. The Neddy operation and all that flowed from it in the way of national, regional and industrial planning (the regional planning councils, the Economic Development Committees or "little Neddies") were conceived essentially as tripartite exercises; and an essential part of this planning exercise, from 1964 onwards, was a prices and incomes policy. It is significant that the Declaration of Intent which launched the prices and incomes policy at the end of 1964 was signed by representatives of the Government, the Confederation of British Industry (C.B.I.) and the T.U.C. at Lancaster House with the solemnity and in the style of a formal treaty between sovereign powers.

It should not be thought that the prices and incomes policy was limited to national negotiations. On the contrary, it was intended to revolutionise shopfloor productivity by the encouragement of productivity bargains at the place of work. Intellectually, it offered a coherent package: the limitation of nationally-negotiated movements in wages and prices as part of a jointly-agreed programme of national economic growth; and the linking of individual wage bargains on the shop-floor and local level to identifiable movements in productivity and efficiency.

UNFORTUNATELY, the institutional changes in industry which the policy presupposed and was intended to promote failed to materialise. Ironically, the policy worked much better on the employers' side where least had been expected of it, than on the union side where changes in structure and power relationships were essential if the policy was to become meaningful. Employers allowed the policy to influence pricing decisions far more than the unions allowed it to influence wages. As a result real wages and consumption rose, profit margins and therefore investment fell. Thus the policy tended to weaken the competitive power of industry, though its emphasis on productivity did achieve certain advances in shop-floor efficiency.

Largely as a response to government pressures, a very considerable degree of centralisation has taken place on the employers' side of industry, and the C.B.I. has become a remarkably effective central spokesman and negotiator for industry—though the centre of power has always lain, and will continue to lie, elsewhere, in the board-rooms of individual companies.

On the union side, however, no such centralisation of authority has taken place. Periodic attempts by the T.U.C. General Council to co-ordinate and influence the wage claims of member-unions in conformity with the national policy have been of little avail, and indeed the authority of the union central organisations has been steadily eroded during the 1960s—largely because the two biggest unions, the T.G.W.U. and A.E.F., have deliberately encouraged the devolution of power from the centre to the shop-floor. The "Swedish solution" would, I remain convinced, have been the best for Britain—the most efficient, the most civilised; and we may yet come back to it in despair at the alternatives. It is significant that the latest thinking on the Left—*vide* Lord Balogh's call for a "social contract" in his 1970 Fabian pamphlet *Labour and Inflation*—postulates this kind of structure. But one is forced to the conclusion that until there is a change in the

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power relationships within the T.U.C. any such policy is bound to remain a charade, with the T.U.C. leaders being credited with a power they are known not to possess—a shuffling of paper armies while real life goes on elsewhere.

RECOGNITION OF THIS FACT was the starting-point, and the essential contribution, of the Donovan Report on industrial relations published in 1968.

In the key chapter in the Donovan Report, written by Professor Hugh Clegg of the Prices and Incomes Board and Warwick University, it states:

> Britain has two systems of industrial relations. The one is the formal system embodied in the official institutions. The other is the informal system, created by the actual behaviour of trade unions and employers' associations, of managers, shop stewards and workers.

The formal system is categorised as a charade, a façade. There is no future in trying to force the informal system to comply with the assumptions of the formal. "Reality cannot be forced to comply with pretences." What is needed, therefore, is to introduce some order and coherence into the informal, decentralised system, and secondly to establish a proper working relationship between it and the centralised, formal system.

The implications of Donovan are therefore sharply at variance with the "Swedish Approach." Donovan is extremely conscious of the complexity as well as of the lack of coherence of actual shop-floor wage structures. It was this complexity which among other things prevented the grand simplicities of the national incomes policy from being translated into shop-floor actualities.

When it moved from analysis to prescription, however, the Donovan Commission began to falter. Its main emphasis was placed upon the gradual reform and formalisation of company and factory wage agreements, with the hope that eventually such agreements would attain the precision required to sustain the weight of incorporation into contractual law. The key instrument for pushing along this reform was to be a new independent agency, the Commission on Industrial Relations (C.I.R.), to review and advise on procedure agreements which would have to be registered with the Department of Employment and Productivity (formerly Ministry of Labour). The C.I.R. in other words would not be concerned with the *contents* of collective agreements—the financial arrangements, which would remain the interest of the Prices and Incomes Board—but with their *form* and *structure*.

The majority of the Commission saw the C.I.R. as a body with no powers but those of persuasion. This, however, was too tame for a number of the members, who insisted that it should be given some (though there was no general agreement even among the minority on what) sanctions or "teeth." This view was expressed particularly cogently by Mr Andrew Shonfield, who argued that in the complex conditions of modern society the liberty of the individual could only be ensured if there was some legal constraint on "mighty subjects", many of whose actions were bound to affect innocent citizens with whom they had no quarrel.

MR SHONFIELD'S NOTE of reservation in the Donovan Report represented the most sophisticated and the most moderate statement of a third approach to trade union reform which found expression in the 1960s, along with the "Swedish" approach of centralisation and the "majority Donovan" approach of gradualism through education on the shop-floor. This third view, traces of which are also found throughout Donovan, is what might be called the Legalist or Contractualist approach—namely that industrial relations should be brought within a clear legal framework. Not all protagonists of this view had Shonfield's objectivity and realism; too many were crude "union-bashers." Some right-wing advocates of union reform in the 1960s had called for tough legal sanctions to weaken the unions, and/or to outlaw specific practices of which they disapproved, such as unofficial strikes or restrictive practices. But such *simpliste* attacks upon the problem tended, as Donovan showed all too well, to wither away when confronted with the complexities of trying to apply the law in such a treacherous area; and, while the Donovan Report recommended a number of changes in the law concerning trade unions, the majority of its members were clearly extremely sceptical about the efficacy of legal action.

Perhaps the Donovan solution might have worked, given a strong C.I.R. with a dynamic chairman and full governmental backing. Unfortunately, the Labour Government decided from the start to go for legislation and to demote the C.I.R. to a secondary role. The Government then failed to carry the parliamentary Labour Party with it, and had to abandon its legislative plans.[1] So the opportunity

[1] The affair is graphically described in Peter Jenkins' *The Battle of Downing Street*, published by Charles Knight.

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for advance created by Donovan was lost—until the 1970 election brought a Conservative government to power, with a commitment to "do something about the unions."

Mr Carr's Modest Proposal

THE GOVERNMENT'S Industrial Relations Bill is a complex and comprehensive document which borrows extensively from all the schools of thought which have built up around this subject in the '60s. It is perhaps nearest in spirit to Shonfield, in that, while disdaining the sweeping "union-bashing" approach of some earlier Tory pronouncements, it clearly sees a role for the law in applying some degree of countervailing power at the margin against the monopolistic powers of the unions.

This is, it seems to me, a perfectly legitimate approach. The trouble with the unions is that they are at one and the same time too strong and too weak. Their organisational defects render them incapable of acting as genuinely revolutionary or progressive forces in society. At the same time, however, full employment and the monopoly power acquired by trade unions in many sectors have given the industrial workers a built-in advantage in collective bargaining which, it can be argued, has upset the natural balance of forces in society and created a permanent tendency to cost inflation. This tendency has paradoxically been strengthened by the increasing capital intensity of industry and the growth of world competition—because both these factors have increased substantially the cost to the employer of having high-cost plant idle through strike action.

It is this basic set of relationships in society, rather than their symptoms such as the "wildcat strike", that need to be tackled. So long as they have the protection of the law but are effectively not legally accountable, union leaderships have no incentive to seek formal contractual relationships or to undertake the arduous task of disciplining their members. The result is too often shop-floor anarchy—not because union members are wicked, but because employers are too often weak and because the pressures on union negotiators come from one direction only—from their members on the shop-floor and not from the forces of society outside.

The Industrial Relations Bill seeks to apply counter-pressures by:

1. establishing a class of "unfair industrial actions", participation in which can lead to legal prosecution;

2. removing legal immunities from unofficial bodies such as shop stewards' committees acting independently of their unions;

3. establishing a new Registrar of Trade Unions and Employers Associations who will, among other things, ensure that these bodies conform in terms of their rules to minimum standards laid down in the legislation;

4. establishing a presumption that future industrial agreements are intended to be legally enforceable unless at the time of the agreement the parties expressly stated an intention to the contrary—and even then there will be machinery to make *procedure* agreements enforceable at law in certain cases;

5. giving the Government powers to insist on cooling-off periods and statutory strike ballots in certain kinds of major disputes.

The Bill contains a number of other provisions, including strengthening the C.I.R. and placing it on a statutory basis, establishing a code of good industrial practice and a charter of workers' rights, statutory appeals machinery to handle cases of alleged unfair dismissal, machinery for determining disputes over recognition and bargaining rights, and outlawing the closed shop (while allowing the rather similar "agency shop"). But the main effect is to "lean on" the unions, to offset the exceptional bargaining strength the postwar economic system has given them, by using legal constraints.

THE OBJECTIVE, as I have said, is reasonable. The new system is not dissimilar from that existing in other advanced industrial countries. In keeping the law out of industrial relations hitherto the U.K. has been something of an anomaly. But will the Act actually work?

On this there can be some doubts. First, there are two vital questions about the legal aspect: Who will bring the actions? And how will the lawyers interpret the law? One of the most telling arguments in the Donovan Report was its revelation that, for all their insistence on the need for legal sanctions, employers in Britain do not even use the legal powers they have—for fear, presumably, of further embittering relations with their workers and getting bogged down in lengthy lawsuits after a dispute is over. The "informality" of the collective bargaining climate prior to the Industrial Relations Bill mostly benefited the workers, but it has not been without benefit to employers too.

Some union officials are confident that with a bit of ingenuity they can make the law work to their advantage rather than the employers'—and they may be right. Certainly the C.B.I. tried hard but unsuccessfully to persuade the Government to amend the Act so as to make the Registrar rather than the

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aggrieved employer responsible for bringing actions under the Bill. This hardly suggests a burning desire to exploit the Bill, but rather indicates that the new courts to be set up to hear cases—the National Industrial Relations Court and Industrial Tribunals—may find themselves under-employed; in which case the Bill could prove the anti-climax of the decade.

The interpretation which the lawyers will put on the Act is also unknowable—an important consideration given the absence of established case law in this area in Britain. And then there is the third question—how in fact do you enforce legal decisions in this field? You cannot compel a man or woman to work in a democracy. There are many ways of exercising indiscipline short of a wildcat strike, and some of them are much harder to pin down. If you enforce penalties on individuals you may either create martyrs or impose severe strains on prison capacity; if you enforce them on organisations you may find that the union becomes a legal "man of straw" which can be bankrupted without affecting the actions of its members. There are many other possible loopholes in the Bill, so that in the end one comes back to a paradox. The Bill has been designed to remedy the defects of an industrial relations system based on "mutual goodwill" and "give-and take." Yet it will only be workable if these attitudes persist.

The other major question about the Bill is whether it does, in fact, create adequate deterrents to unconstitutional action. It can be argued that the major advantage enjoyed by strikers under the present system is not legal immunity but their entitlement, when going on strike, not only to income tax refunds but also to social security benefits. These payments, it has been argued, have effectively financed many an unconstitutional strike, and they are untouched by the Industrial Relations Bill.

Any worthwhile industrial relations legislation must, in my view, meet the following criteria:

1. it must start from a recognition, as Donovan did, of the primacy of the shopfloor as the meaningful centre of industrial relations, and provide incentives to both sides to improve shop-floor bargaining procedures;
2. it must at the same time seek to strengthen the authority of the national union organisations over their members;
3. it must go some way towards correcting the imbalance of power between employers and unions in a full employment, technologically advanced economy;
4. it must end the status of the unions as "favoured outlaws";
5. it must be workable.

In my view the Carr legislation meets these criteria better than any package so far proposed in Britain. But as to whether it will prove worthwhile is a reasonable matter for doubt. Probably it will produce a marginally better climate in the long run, as trade unions come to adjust their attitudes to operating within a legal framework. But any benefit is likely to be long term, and in the short run its effect is likely to be negative.

The Nemesis of Inflation

THE TROUBLE IS that Britain faces a serious short-term crisis, and unless we solve it we shall, in Keynes' words, "in the long run all be dead" (or at least a lot weaker and poorer). The pressing problem that we face is galloping cost inflation, and to this the long-term improvement in shop-floor *mores* has little immediate relevance.

Cost inflation such as we are now experiencing is the nemesis of the stagnant society—not so much a new development as the acceleration to grotesque proportions of trends which have been evident for most of the post-war period. It arises primarily from the efforts of sectional groups—by no means all of them organised in trade unions, or members of the working class—to improve or maintain their share of a national product which is growing far too slowly to satisfy the "revolution of rising expectation", which modern methods of communication and marketing have universalised in the world today. Inflation in this sense springs from fundamental but essentially simple psychological forces: the erosion of fatalism, the conviction that a better life is not only possible for all but a basic human right; impatience, the "we want it now" syndrome; and (increasingly) distrust in the ability of the authorities to ensure a just and generally satisfactory distribution of the national wealth, with the result that sectional groups are increasingly inclined to take the law into their own hands and grab what they regard as their fair share of the pork-barrel.

This is not to say that people have become more greedy. They have, however, become increasingly conscious not only of the opportunities of affluence, but also of their sectional power. Traditional ideas of the "just wage", which are strongly rooted in Western society despite the teachings of the classical economists, have faded rapidly in the last few years. As people's material desires have grown—fanned, it must be said, by the same mass media and business establishments which protest most vehemently at the consequences

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of their attempts to realise these desires—so has their sense of power within society; and before these twin pressures traditional restraints have progressively weakened.

This is not a specifically British phenomenon. It is, indeed, world-wide. The average level of wage increases in money terms has risen in the advanced industrial countries from below 5% per annum at the beginning of the 1960s—roughly equivalent to attainable increases in productivity—to well over 10% per annum at the beginning of the 1970s—substantially above attainable productivity increases in all but a very few countries. The surprising thing in a sense is that it did not happen earlier. As the Englishman said when shown the vast volumes of water pouring over the cataracts at Niagara: "What's so bloody marvellous about that? I can't see anything to stop it." It has been made abundantly clear in country after country in the last few years that there is neither the political will nor the political power to stop inflation, and that the only sensible thing therefore is to join the flood of demands if one is not to be submerged by them. The fact is, or has appeared to be, that the change in power relationships brought about by full employment, the growth of union organisation, the intensification of world competition and capital intensity in industry, combined with the populist pressures generated by universal suffrage, has created in every modern community a permanent tendency to inflation, by removing such dykes as have traditionally existed against the flood of sectional claims. What has happened in the last few years is that this fundamental change has become apparent to all, and has begun—surprisingly belatedly—to determine people's actions.

There have been some significant landmarks in the decline of the authority of the state in this area, and the lessons have been widely marked. Perhaps the most spectacular was the capitulation of the Gaullist régime, supposedly the strongest and most authoritarian of the Western democracies, to the French unions—among the weakest and least impressive in the Western world—in June 1968. In the following year Mr Wilson's government in Britain was forced under union and political pressure to abandon both its prices and incomes policy and its attempt to legislate for industrial relations reform. It was after this dual retreat that the flood gates of wage demands opened in the U.K.

Similarly, and from the world point of view most damagingly, the Nixon administration in the U.S. was at the end of 1970 forced to reverse its anti-inflationary policy announced with such verve and passion two years before. As in the U.K. in previous years, the Administration failed to kill inflation but killed growth instead. What is significant is that throughout this two-year experiment the U.S. business establishment consistently argued, and acted on the assumption, that the Nixon policies would fail. They have been proved right, and we are having to live with the consequences. When governments try to do something and demonstrably fail, it is worse than if they had never tried. And the U.S., by virtue of the fact that the dollar is effectively today *the* international currency—which means that the rest of the world will always accept American I.O.Us *faute de mieux*—has a unique and ominous ability to export its inflation and its balance of payments deficits to the outside world.

SHORT OF A MAJOR CHANGE in political attitudes, therefore, the pressures of world-wide cost inflation are likely to intensify in the 1970s. The problems posed for governments are acute. Should governments accept the fact of inflation, and adjust their policies to mitigating its social evils—particularly by taking steps to protect those on fixed incomes? Or should they continue to resist? If they do the former, they risk increasing inflation, by adding their piece of fuel to the flames; if the latter they risk doing serious damage to the nation's industrial fabric and social structure, and maximising the damage caused by an inflation they may deplore but cannot control. One loses either way, and it is a moot point which is the lesser evil.

If one could envisage a situation in which the rate of inflation levelled off at a stable, if uncomfortably high, rate it would no doubt be possible to adjust to it. The world after all managed to adjust to a situation where for most of the post-war period prices have risen by around 3% per annum. Today the rate of increase is more than twice that, but it should not be beyond the wit of man to adjust our thinking and institutions to a situation where prices rose at an annual rate of, say, 7% or 8%. But unfortunately there is not the slightest ground for thinking that in present circumstances any particular rate of inflation may prove stable. We may be in for a period of constant acceleration, failing decisive counteraction. For if the essence of inflation is that sectional groups are determined to improve their share of the national income and have lost confidence in the ability of the authorities to protect them, there will be continual—and

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of course self-defeating—pressure to better the going rate of income increases ruling at any one time.

Cost inflation is, as already mentioned, a world-wide phenomenon. Indeed, there is a remarkable similarity in the rates by which wages are rising in the advanced industrial countries. There is however much greater variation between countries in the rate of growth of productivity, and it is in those countries where productivity has been growing most slowly—mainly the Anglo-Saxon nations —that the effects of wage inflation on prices, on profits and on general competitiveness have been most acute.

Cost inflation is a peculiarly acute problem for the U.K. precisely because of the stagnation of production. This has meant that the ability to satisfy desires is less than elsewhere. It has also meant that increases in costs impact more immediately on profits and prices than elsewhere. Moreover, profit margins in British industry are exceptionally low, partly as a result of the years of low growth, partly as a delayed result of the prices and incomes policy. British industry is also desperately in need of more investment, to increase and modernise capacity The share of investment in national income is one of the lowest among advanced industrial countries. As a result productivity is low in absolute terms in relation to our competitors, as well as having a much lower rate of climb.

If British industry is to break out of its vicious circle of low growth—low investment —low productivity—low growth, it needs:

> *1.* a substantial increase in profit margins to finance investment (bearing in mind that we are in a climate of uncertain expectations and very tight and expensive money);
> *2.* a massive and urgent drive to improve the use of labour through greater flexibility, better supervision and radically improved wage systems—for example, in many industries away from piece rates towards scientifically based time-rated systems.

And it needs to achieve both these very quickly.

Unfortunately the move towards productivity bargaining, the most hopeful development from the prices and incomes policy, which would have facilitated *(2)*, came to an abrupt end in 1970. And the rise in costs reduced the share of profits in the national income from 12.1% in the first half of 1968 to 9.5% in the first half of 1970, since when there has been little discernible change of trend.

Thus British industry is peculiarly vulnerable to cost inflation. In the present climate, attempts to modernise wage structures and raise productivity are liable to prove very expensive and hard to negotiate. At the same time, if industry is to recoup the profits necessary to invest and modernise, it must offset any increases in costs by higher prices—with the consequent risk that the inflationary spiral will be given a further twist, and fresh wage demands be generated.

THIS, IN A NUTSHELL, is Britain's economic problem today. The blame must be laid, first and foremost, at the door of management—business management, for timidity, lack of vision and, too often, sheer incompetence; government, for failure to manage the economy effectively over many years; and trade unions (though they are of the three perhaps the least culpable), for failing to exercise responsibility to match their power, and for allowing their members to set forth on a quest from which they can derive no long-term benefit but only harm. For let us be clear as to the limits of trade union power. The evidence shows that union militancy cannot, in the long run, achieve significant improvements either in real living standards or in the share of national income going to union members. What it *can* do is to raise costs throughout the economy. Despite their power to do grave damage, however, the unions are essentially prisoners of the system.

Governing Justly & Effectively

HOW CAN the problem be met? The first point to establish is that there can be no solution through continued industrial stagnation. The institutional power of the unions is such that previously-established correlations between levels of unemployment and wage stability no longer apply—partly because the labour market itself is losing its homogeneity and becoming more differentiated, and partly because the reforms of recent years have considerably diminished the hardships of redundancy. Traditional solutions for demand inflation are worse than useless for cost inflation. Moreover, without the prospect of expansion industry will hardly undertake the investment on which our long-term future crucially depends.

The second point is that price restraint—as currently being exercised by the C.B.I.—could, in the long (and perhaps not-so-long) run, unless accompanied by some response on the wages front, prove seriously counter-productive. This is not to say the C.B.I. was

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wrong to try. Desperate situations require desperate remedies. And it might just work.[2]

I do believe, however—in contrast apparently to the Conservative government—that at some stage, and sooner rather than later, a deal has to be done with the unions if Britain is to survive as an industrial power. The deal must relate wages to productivity rather than prices—that is, the reward for restraint in incomes in the short term must be a firm commitment by government and industry to expansion in the longer term; with, at plant and industry level, a return to productivity bargaining in the true sense of the word.

It may be that, to arrive at this point, government has to demonstrate (as it is now trying to do) that it can if necessary stand up to the unions in wage confrontations; and try by all possible means to mobilise public opinion against wage inflation. It may be that before we are much older the government will be driven to impose a statutory wage freeze. Many people in industry believe this will happen, despite government protestations; and in such situations business tends to be a better predictor of what government will do than government itself.

None of these measures however can by themselves solve the problem. Nor, important though they are, can the long-term structural changes in industrial relations and industrial policy by which Mr Heath sets so much store. What is desperately needed is a strategy to cope comprehensively with the twin problems of stagnation and cost inflation. It is not clear to me that this government yet has such a strategy, as distinct from a set of instinctive responses, about the economy (some right, some wrong) and some very clear ideas of individual reforms (ditto). Nor do I yet feel confident that Mr Heath and his colleagues understand that, in the complex conditions of modern life, power has to be shared to be effective, and management by consent is the only type which is likely to command respect and cooperation. Nor, again, can one feel as yet that the short-term management of the economy is under any better control under Mr Anthony Barber than it was under Mr James Callaghan (let alone Mr Roy Jenkins).

One fact which is, however, quite clear is the need of the government to regain the confidence of the public that inflation *can* be controlled as an essential prerequisite to controlling it. It is because sectional groups lost this confidence that in 1969 and 1970 they started to take the law into their own hands. The government has to demonstrate, therefore, that it can govern—not only effectively, but justly. I think Mr Heath understands the first part. I am not so sure about the second.

Energy & Lethargy

THE PROBLEMS of cost inflation are only one symptom, if a particularly acute one, of what is in my view the crucial issue of modern society—the problem of coping with the consequences of technological change. This is the central question facing all governments, and indeed all major human institutions today. How can we make change our servant and not our master? How can we accommodate ourselves and our institutions to those changes which are inevitable?

Earlier in this article I delivered myself of the startling thought that we live in a rapidly changing world, and that we are having great difficulties in bridging the "technological gap"—in successfully applying the lessons of modern technology in our practical affairs. These difficulties are as nothing, however, compared with the difficulties of adapting to past technology and its consequences—the problems of "institutional lag." These two problems are, of course, closely interlinked, because the less successful one is in coping with past technology, the less ready and able one will be to exploit the opportunities of today's and tomorrow's technology.

The changes wrought in our world environment by the achievements of yesterday's technology need little elaboration. The effects of medicine on world population; the effects of modern industry on the environment and on life-styles; the effects of developments in transport and communication, not only on the environment but still more on people's attitudes and modes of thought—these are the essential stuff of what we choose to call "modern civilisation." They are therefore the essential stuff of politics in the broadest sense.

Wherever we look today on the surface of

[2] It is often argued that the simplest way to keep down wages is to freeze prices, since if they cannot pass on cost increases firms will be forced to contain them. This policy might indeed work in the long run. In the short term, however, the tendency is for firms to meet cost increases by cutting back investments. The rise in real wages then resulting from increased money wages and stable prices is liable to boost consumer spending, so that firms may recoup their extra costs by higher sales volumes, but at the expense of investment and exports (since goods are then liable to be diverted to the booming home market). The end result is likely to be a high-consumption, low-investment, low-export economy—hardly a recipe for dynamism or viability.

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the globe we find institutions of men and women—governmental, business, financial, educational, political, trade union, and so on—grappling painfully and not very successfully, with the problems of change. All these institutions share the common characteristic of a certain conservatism, a certain lethargy; and they are typically subject to increasing shocks from an environment which is being remoulded at frightening speed by the past achievements of mankind. Hence the increasing tensions of society—tensions which, we are now beginning to admit, could break modern society as we know it unless we can find ways of making our institutions less resistant to change, unless we can better understand the chemistry of innovation.

LET ME GIVE a few, almost random, examples. Everywhere in the modern world we find tension and alienation between the generations, and in our great institutions of learning. This is the so-called "student problem", though the problem may well lie with the institutions and their methods rather than with the students. We find increasing problems in keeping our great cities safe, hygienic, tolerable as living systems. In the United Sates racial frictions are intensified by the impact of automation on jobs and by the increasing strains of urban life. The world financial system struggles through successive crises to find a viable replacement for the Bretton Woods structure erected in quite different circumstances a quarter-century ago. The Roman Catholic Church faces its crisis of faith. And—perhaps the most dangerous example of institutional rigidity in the world today—the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, the smouldering resentments in Poland and the other Communist bloc countries and in Russia itself among the intelligentsia, demonstrate the almost total inability of the once-revolutionary Communist Party of the Soviet Union to accommodate itself to even the most modest adjustments to modern thinking and technology within its ranks. There exist today within the Soviet bloc all the objective conditions of a revolutionary situation. The Russian régime has moved right back to the posture of Alexander III or Nicholas I, the "gendarme of Europe." When a régime as powerful as this reaches such a stage of internal brittleness it is a situation of great potential danger for the world, for structures that cannot bend under pressure are liable to explode.

Port in The Storm

THE POINT IS that these are all instances of a common problem, not dissimilar in kind from the problems of a business firm in instituting technical change or those which we have been considering in the field of industrial relations. The present cost inflation deadlock is an example of a malfunctioning system in an environment of change. How are we to make our institutions more creative, more dynamic, more responsive to change?

First, it is an illusion to think that we can go up the *cul-de-sac* of stagnation or immobility, that we can solve the problems of change by not having any. The last decade should have shown us that we do not solve any problems by opting for a slower rate of growth. We merely make it harder to adapt to the problems when they hit us, as they will. We are all, whether we like it or not, citizens of McLuhan's "global electronic village." We are all, therefore, subject to the same stimuli, the same desires, the same sales pressures. There is no likelihood that men and women will lose their taste for material wealth and progress, nor is there any conceivable reason why they should be induced or encouraged to do so.

This does not mean, however, that all patterns of growth are equally good. There are real, and agonisingly difficult and complex, choices to be made between public and private expenditure; between social welfare and private consumption; between work and leisure; between roads and houses; between schools and factories; between foreign aid and home investment; between faster travel and a more beautiful countryside; between cities made for pedestrians or for motorists; between incentives for *entrepreneurs* and a more equal income distribution; between amenities and efficiency; and so on. One cannot make such choices dogmatically. Each has to be considered on its merits, at the margin, in the light of whatever information (too often inadequate) is available. We confuse the argument, which is about priorities in the allocation of resources to raise the quality of life, by importing extraneous issues about the desirability of "growth" as such. The point is that the richer the community the greater the number of options it has—provided that its pattern of growth has not been such as to close too many options on the way up, as it were.

We cannot, therefore, satisfy the needs of our people without taking maximum advantage of the opportunities created by human ingenuity. But we cannot exploit these advantages

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without harming people. Every industrial innovation creates some redundancies or forces some people to change their way of life or work. Every new road, factory or power station harms *somebody's* amenities. There can be no change without some casualties, for change itself is distasteful and difficult for some, and on the whole human creatures are instinctive conservatives. And the pains of change are often more immediately visible than the benefits.

Every institution—especially representative institutions like political parties or democratic governments—tends to be weighted in favour of the status quo; this is the essence of the problem of "institutional lag." The institution of which this is least true is, or ought to be, the business enterprise—not because it is a more sophisticated institution than the others, or led by men of greater wisdom or vision (that is seldom the case)—but because it has to adapt to change to survive, because it has a high mortality rate, and because (as Peter Drucker points out) it is a highly *dispensible* institution, one that therefore has constantly to justify its existence by good performance.

WHAT IS NEEDED, therefore, in my view, if we are to escape from the confines of the Stagnant Society and the increasing shock-waves of external change on resistant social and institutional structures, is:

1. a conscious national strategy for innovation based on national planning, involving the other main elements of "national management" as well as government. Such a strategy must integrate all the main aspects of industrial, social and economic policy to the achievement of clearly definable national objectives.

2. much more feedback, based on the recognition of common problems, between our national managers in government and our sectional managers in business.

3. a clear understanding, not only of the necessity, but also of the costs, of change. Change will take place anyway. But its pains can be minimised and its benefits maximised, only if there is a clear understanding of what is at stake and where the common interest lies, and if there is a genuine consensus in favour of change in any given situation. This means that those liable to be harmed must be compensated rather than ignored. Otherwise the general will, which in the end determines the directions of all societies, will opt either for resisting change as long as possible or for adapting to it half-heartedly and defensively. It is largely because this is what has happened in the U.K. over most of the post-war period that we find ourselves in our present plight.

I have inevitably indulged in a high degree of abstraction in order to condense my thoughts. I think however that it will not be difficult for the reader to translate my general principles into highly concrete examples. What I am saying, essentially, is this. The modern world is coping very badly with the forces of change, and unless we do better society as we know it is not likely to survive. This is our central problem today.

In some ways—though not in all—the problem is particularly acute in Britain; though because of our greater social stability we ought to be one of the best-equipped societies to find a way out of the maze. Perhaps we can: but only if we can match stability with greater dynamism, and if we can evolve a radically new style of government to cope with change in the way that the more progressive business enterprises plan—identifying problems in advance rather than reacting to them *seriatim* as responses to a series of apparently random shocks. We are embarked (to use an image which may impress our present nautical Prime Minister) on hazardous and stormy seas, and we may not have much time to reach port.

Michael Shanks

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LETTERS

"Every Day"?

MR TERRENCE DES PRES' ESSAY in your September issue is admirable in its suggestion of new ways of looking at literature. It also contains an implicit criticism of our culture that I would like to make explicit: the attitude toward life and death expressed by those who have faced death in concentration camps or in war, who have seen the faces of the dying, have smelled and touched the dead, and have been bent to an existence of brutalising austerity by powers over which they have no control is one of affirmation, which stands in marked contrast to the whimpering nihilism of so many 20th-century writers for whom, like Eliot's Hollow Men, life is physically unchallenging and death a distant abstraction.

What Mr Des Pres' essay suggests is that an obsessive concern with the nihilistic implications of death is a consequence of the relative rarity not familiarity of death in a society—a connection recognised long ago by Margaret Mead in her first study of Samoa and recently explored by Philippe Aries in a paper on Western attitudes toward death. And what needs noting is that, although death is a theme central to much 20th-century literature, this literature tells us almost nothing of death as a reality; rather it dwells upon death as an abstraction, which would seem to evoke anxiety precisely because that reality is lacking, because in our society death has no immediacy. This literature contains no "survivors", no affirmation, only the self-conscious, neurotic anxiety (in exactly Freud's sense of the term), of a culture in which, as Arnold Toynbee put it, "death under peace-time conditions of life has become unfamiliar"; a culture in which it has been necessary to invent the cant phrase "extreme situation" to represent what human beings in all ages and cultures except ours have confronted every day.

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Johnson's "Third World"

PROFESSOR HARRY JOHNSON'S "Word to the Third World" [ENCOUNTER, October] contains an interesting diagnosis of some important problems of the political economy of development. His approach is particularly useful and refreshing in that it recognises a set of crucial socio-political factors in relation to the aims, aspirations and strategies of the "developing" nations—factors which, hitherto, have been either universally ignored or (what is effectively the same thing) treated as "exogenous." There is, however a certain degree of oversimplification both in his diagnosis and in his "prescription" which calls for a brief comment.

The observed preference for "planning" and *dirigisme* in many parts of the Third World does not necessarily, or primarily, originate from the pre-War German and Soviet experience—or, for that matter, the post-War increase in the role of the public sector in Western economies—although such ideologies provide a respectable cloak for what would otherwise have been recognised as downright bureaucratic authoritarianism and paternalism.

It is true that one cannot study the problems of these countries in isolation from two centuries of European and American experience. But it is also true that most of these countries resemble, in their own peculiar ways, the European countries before the French Revolution (and sometimes *much* before that) in nearly all their *fundamental* aspects, rather than the post-War Western societies, Nazi Germany or the Soviet Union. Professor Johnson rightly remarks that it would be unscientific to attribute the failure of "controls" merely to incompetent and dishonest administrators. But he fails to observe that it is the consequence of a socio-political environment in which it is simply impossible to have "honest" and efficient civil servants, as, indeed, it is also very hard to come by a real, genuine *bourgeoisie* of the old breed in any appreciable numbers or with any considerable socio-economic power.

INSTEAD, THE SYSTEM is geared to the "production" and the flourishing of an army of bureaucratic-technocratic *rentiers* in alliance with the old —but not yet *ancien*—élite. Incidentally, his reference to the wasteful way in which "education" is pursued should be a good reminder that a purely abstract (and statistical) view of the problem of "skill-constraint" in these countries is of no value; just as it should modify the superficial view held by many people and institutions in the West that an important limiting factor in the development process is the lack of "proper education." The developing countries may in fact suffer *more* from their educated élite than from the uneducated mass of the population. At least the latter have been given no chance to try!

It is also true that in many of these countries concern for "fairness" and "social justice" has been misconceived. But, more often than not, the motive is political rather than "humanitarian." It takes into account the relative socio-economic power (latent or explicit) of various social strata: to whoever can, or may, pursue his actual or potential claim actively shall be given according to his socio-economic significance. This is basically why in a number of these countries the peasant enjoys no protection whatever, while the industrial worker enjoys both a relatively high standard of living and (sometimes) even security of employment. It is not *Realpolitik* to allow a factory to close down!

ALL THIS IS HARDLY EVIDENCE for the failure of planning and central control — however these

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London

INCREDIBILITY: The award for the political dictum of the year went to Mrs Judith Hart, the left-wing Labour M.P., from Lanark, for her immortal line: "Members exercising their integrity could destroy the credibility of the whole party."

THE ECONOMIST

London

STATISTICS: *So 154 full-time teaching officers of economics at British universities believe that the economic effects of joining the Common Market are more likely to be unfavourable than favourable to Britain, and 142 think the opposite. Or do they?*

The count is taken from two identically worded letters in yesterday's "Times" (except that one says "favourable" and the other "unfavourable"). Both sets of names are plucked from a survey by Nicholas Kaldor among 600 economists. Kaldor, Jim Callaghan's old Treasury tax adviser, appears not surprisingly among the unfavourables.

The questionnaire asked the economists whether they would like their names to appear in a letter. Most did, some didn't. What the published correspondence does not reveal is the final tally. What do *Britain's teaching officers of economics think? Of those who expressed an opinion, 197 to 193 said we should be better off. A pro-Market majority of four. Sorry Nicky.*

THE GUARDIAN

London

CRYSTAL BALL: *The undersigned [J. R. Colville] not being a full-time teaching officer in economics in a British university, concludes from your correspondence column that economics must be a science approximately comparable in exactitude to astrology.*

THE TIMES

Belgrade

CENSORSHIP: The Yugoslav authorities here have confirmed the prohibition of the magazine *"Kultura"* which published in its current number an old article by Nicolai Berdayev. The famous Russian philosopher was exiled from the Soviet Union in 1920 and died in Paris in 1948. His article dates from the year 1945 and deals with the Christian aspects of his philosophy. According to the Belgrade court, the article was anti-Marxist in inspiration and was capable "of provoking civic agitation" and "of affecting the friendly relations between Yugoslavia and the U.S.S.R." At the same time it announced the banning of the current number of *"Student"*, the journal of the students of Belgrade.

LE MONDE

London

WEEKEND COMPETITION: *Competitors are asked for a speech or scene from John Osborne's next play. Limit 150 words. Entries by 14 September.*

London

AUTHENTICITY: *Although I long ago gave up reading philistine leftish weeklies [John Osborne writes], I was tempted to enter your competition asking for an extract from a new play by myself. I did just this, selecting a fairly typical passage from "The Gift of Friendship," which will be published with another play of mine by Faber and Faber. Unlike Graham Greene, I failed completely. Reading the winning entries, I can see why.*

NEW STATESMAN

Cambridge

AND PRINTER BEGAT ERROR: Cambridge University Press, one of the world's most famous printers of the Bible, is celebrating its 450th anniversary with a major printing error in 10,000 lectern editions of the New English Bible. On page 130, in the middle of the Old Testament book of Leviticus, there appear 42 lines from Ecclesiasticus in the Apocrypha. The error is all the more glaring since Leviticus is in prose and Ecclesiasticus is in verse.

In a 1702 Bible, verse 161 of Psalm 119, reads: "Printers have persecuted me . . ." It should read "princes."

SUNDAY TIMES

Westminster

GEOGRAPHY: *Both sides of the Commons produced passionate eloquence, but some speakers, unfortunately, were unable to avoid the absurd factual errors that often accompany such eloquence.*

It is fairly well known, for instance, that the poet Rupert Brooke died of blood-poisoning in Greece on his way to the Dardanelles. But this did not prevent Mr John Boyd-Carpenter (Con., Kingston-on-Thames) from declaring in his "unity-and-peace-in-Europe" peroration that Brooke had "soddened the mud of Flanders."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

London

OUT OF TOUCH: There is a strong hint of the exotic about Yehudi Menuhin; thin-faced, hooded eyes, silky-blond hair, unidentifiable accent. The effect is heightened by the unflinching way he uses semi-archaic words such as "noble," "reverent" and "majestic".

RADIO TIMES (BBC)

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things may be considered undesirable on other grounds. And, precisely for the reasons that Professor Johnson has so lucidly advanced, his advice to the Third World to go over to competition is equally misplaced. One might as well advise these countries to use a "rational" approach to economic policy, planning, man-power training and so on—but all in vain. The fact remains that, in many of these countries, the *objective conditions* (as partly explained by Professor Johnson himself) defy both competition and planning as efficient means of accumulation, resource allocation, and income-distribution.

Necker, Turgot, and their more revolutionary colleagues were soon to find out that the slogan of *laissez-faire* had been addressed to the wrong people. It is the same with the misuse of socialism and planning in the case of some of the developing countries of our era. If by social and economic development one implies a transformation of the society involving "changes in kind [rather] than merely in degree" (Rostow), then it will not really do to keep "other things equal" and declare: Planning has failed, now let's try Competition!

M. A. KATOUZIAN

University of Kent, Canterbury

I DO NOT FIND any clear-cut points of disagreement with most of what Mr Katouzian writes. Much of the apparent difference stems from the fact that everyone has his own universe of "typical" developing countries, and I was concerned primarily with former British colonies, for which I think my remarks hold good. "Planning for development" is a Western idea; without it there would probably still have been bureaucracy, privileges for those with socio-economic power, etc; but I am sure that the system would have functioned very differently.

Where we part company is over the utter and intractable determinism of his view of these countries. I do not believe that "it is simply impossible to have 'honest' and efficient civil servants"—I have met many—but it is hard to avoid corruption when politicians or civil servants have the power to grant or withhold valuable monopoly privileges under the guise of "planning." Similarly, I do not believe it is pointless to observe that those countries that have allowed more competition and been less ambitious about planning have tended to do better than the rest, and to point the moral and suggest the explanation. It is fallacious history—bad Marxist pseudo-sociology, and certain economic nonsense—to assert that "*objective conditions*" (whatever that phrase means—italicisation merely gives pretentious pomposity to scientific emptiness) freeze the existing situation to the point where nothing can be done or can even usefully be said about the possibilities of effecting change. Certainly the possibilities may be narrow at any point of time, and feasible processes of change consequently slow to produce a significant effect. But it is both anti-scientific and humanly irresponsible, as well as insultingly condescending, to tell the leaders and thinkers of these countries that they are the completely helpless victims of absolute social determinism.

Unfortunately, far too much so-called "economics of development", as represented particularly by the writings of Gunnar Myrdal and his followers, has been of this character.

HARRY G. JOHNSON

London School of Economics

Playing Games

PHILIP HOBSBAUM ["Playing Literary Games", ENCOUNTER, August] points out that "Berne's thesis is that most human relationships have a central figure who is trying to obtain reassurance by scoring off the others in the particular game he is playing." This is pretty old hat of Dr Berne; it's that "inferiority complex" thing again and Adler got there around seventy years ago. Pretty tough, too, on Hobsbaum who's plugging Berne: Adlerian (and Jungian) ideas have influenced literary criticism almost as strongly as Freudian ones. They might not have influenced Hobsbaum, but that is a different story. Mind you, we could use a little more Adler if only to drive out the Freudian drivel that Hobsbaum offers when he states (dogmatically, not deliberately) that "it is clear that Cordelia and her father in the first act of *King Lear* . . . are bent on avoiding sexual intimacy" and that Lady Macbeth has "penis envy" (she certainly wants power—hence the daggers, but it is real power she wants; not just something hanging between her legs which will stiffen aggressively when required).

But Bernean Analysis (or grossly oversimplified Adlerian psychology), as Hobsbaum applies it, yields only the obvious and the ludicrous. Is Othello really playing, amongst other things, "'Wooden Leg' (what do you expect of a black man?)"? With the problems I've got with students who want to forget the play and talk (worse still, write) about Othello as a Black Panther, an Uncle Tom, a militaristic Martin Luther King, a Cassius Clay or a Jamaican Olivier, I don't need this sort of help. Othello's blackness is only a small part of what makes him different from the society around him. His romantic background and military success (he's a kind of archetypal adventurer; Jung is more help here than Berne if you want to play the category game) are far more important influences in the play. I don't go a bundle on Leavis's "Diabolic Intellect and The Noble Hero"; but I'd buy that (anti-Bradley and all) long before I'd spend a penny (except metaphorically) on "Wooden Leg".

The *pièce de résistance*, the "study in some depth of *Emma*", is easy to resist; it provides no more than a superficial account of the obvious. Has anyone who has read the novel not spotted instantly that Mr Woodhouse "is a lot of the time in a natural child state"? And that Emma herself is to some extent the child of the parent and the parent of the child? Admittedly, it's good to see a literary critic put Mr Knightley in his place. Miss

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Austen saw Mr Knightley more critically than either Arnold Kettle or Graham Hough. But Miss Austen (I think) believes that Mr Knightley represents a realisable ideal. Most students, however, find him unattractively aggressive at times and they spot this without having to play games first. In fact, Berne's "three basic Ego states . . . the Parent state . . . the Adult state . . . and the Child state" are far from being "immensely useful in categorising and so evaluating the movement of character" in *Emma* or the other novels and plays that Hobsbaum flips through. The use of this cumbersome apparatus yields much less than a reasonably attentive, straightforward reading.

All this Berne stuff is just another lit. crit. gimmick, one in line with current educational trends. Children now play games in primary schools and are encouraged to do so at the secondary stage; it follows by the moronic logic of the age that they should carry on doing so at colleges and universities. Literary critics, of course, have been playing games with each other for years. Academics play variations of "I'm Only Trying to Help" and "It's For Your Own Good" and "This Hurts Me More", as they verbally bash each other about.

So let's see what Hobsbaum plays now. The ball's in your court, Phil, baby.

NED ROGER

Denbighshire Technical College, Wrexham, North Wales

THE VALUE of Eric Berne's approach to psychology, as I see it, is that he concentrates upon inter-relationships between different personalities. Previous psychologists tended far more to isolate an individual from his social context for special analysis. This aberration has bedevilled literary criticism for all too long: it led Coleridge to read his private preoccupations into *Hamlet* and A. C. Bradley to treat *Othello* as though it was a play about Iago. The analysis of individual character can have, at best, only a limited validity since most human situations involve people coming into contact with each other. It is what happens when contact is established that concerns Dr Berne, and I feel it ought to concern the literary critic, too. I thought it would be a simple enough matter to adapt the Bernean approach to literary criticism, but evidently it wasn't simple enough for Mr Roger. The only game I should be prepared to play with him is to inquire why he bothered to write his letter in the first place.

PHILIP HOBSBAUM

Glasgow

Splitting Hairs

EVEN the fact that you publish a splendid magazine and give much pleasure to your readers does not permit you to perpetuate the solecism (page three of the November issue) of "fine tooth-comb."

It should, of course, be "fine-tooth comb."

JOHN METCALF

London

AUTHORS

Michael Shanks' Penguin, *The Stagnant Society*, first published in 1961, is shortly coming out in a new edition which deals extensively with the problems and lessons of the 1960s. His article in this number, "The English Sickness," is adapted from the book's final chapter.

Bernard Lewis' article *The Study of Islam* is based on the text of the third Marshall G. S. Hodgson Memorial Lecture which he recently delivered at the University of Chicago. . . .

Michael Polanyi is possibly the only figure in British academic life who has held a chair in both the natural sciences and the social sciences, having established his reputation in both physical chemistry and philosophy. He lectured, until his retirement a few years ago, at the University of Manchester and at Oxford (where he now lives). A volume of essays in his honour was published by Routledge in 1961 under the title of *The Logic of Personal Knowledge* (with contributions from, among others, C. V. Wedgwood, Arthur Koestler, Marjorie Grene, and Ely Devons). . . .

Ferdinand Mount (born 1939) is chief leader writer for the London *Daily Mail*. His novel *Very Like a Whale* was published in 1967. "The Literary Spirit in Politics" is an adapted excerpt from *The Theatre of Politics*, to be published in the spring by Weidenfeld & Nicolson. . . .

John Mander is the author of *Berlin, Hostage for the West* (1962), *Great Britain or Little England?* (1963), and a book on Latin America, *The Static Society* (1969). He has just published a volume of poems, *Elegiacs*, and is working on a study of Anglo-German relations since 1800. . . .

Sidney Hook is Chairman of the Department of Philosophy at New York University. . . .

Laurence Lerner, Professor of English Literature at the University of Sussex, has published three books of poetry, two novels, and two books of literary criticism (*The Truest Poetry* and *The Truth-tellers*). His new book is *The Uses of Nostalgia* (Chatto & Windus).

Justus George Lawler is Editorial Director of Herder and Herder, New York, and the author of books on the ethics of modern warfare, higher education, religious art, etc.

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